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1. Introduction

As American cities have developed over time each reflects the many legal, political, and social forces of the times. Early park planning reflected the familiar public squares and formal gardens of our European heritage. However, as American cities prospered in the late 1800's new problems arose. Bigger cities became an "ugly mix of factories and tenements with congested, smelly streets."

"The American park, recreation, and conservation movement was born in both the teeming inner cities of the late 1880's and in the vast, beautiful unspoiled wilderness of the West. The need for open space in the cities, the preservation of our natural wonders, and the need for recreation in urban areas led to the development of our first city and national parks. This development was uniquely American and resulted in a national effort to provide recreation and park facilities for the public, as well as conservation of our natural wonders." Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, National Recreation and Parks Association , ©1996, p.5.

Architects, landscape architects, and engineers were challenged to develop "citywide improvement plans that focused on aesthetics." These plans were the birth of the City Beautiful movement. Great cities of the 19th century developed "grand" park plans and systems that endure today as monuments to their foresight and dedication to a quality living environment. The parks, parkways, and open spaces that were built and preserved remain as their legacy. Frederick Law Olmstead, the father of American park planning, stated in 1881:

"Considering that [the American Parks Movement] has occurred simultaneously with a great enlargement of towns and development of urban habits, is it not reasonable to regard it as a self-preserving instinct of civilization?"

The catalysts for these early "grand plans" - traffic congestion, rapidly diminishing natural resources, and increasing urban development - were all expressed during the *Vision 20/20* process. The Parks, Open Space, and Greenways plan element is a response to these concerns and is truly a "Grand Plan" in the traditional sense.

But what is a "Grand Plan" and what distinguishes it from any other park plan? Why is a "Grand Plan" significant? Attributes of early Grand Plans:

- C Brought the "Country into the City" through Parks and Parkways;
- C Protected outstanding natural features such as Forests, Streams, Rivers, and Hilltops;
- C Provided relief from urban congestion, and opportunities for Recreation and Socializing; and
- C Provided multi-modal linkages between Forests, Parks, and Gardens, Residential Areas, and Downtowns.

The "Grand Plans" contained concepts for many civic improvements, including:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| C Plazas | C Walks |
| C Fountains | C Public buildings |
| C Memorials | C Picnic areas |
| C Gardens | C Tree lined streets with medians |
| C Bandshells | (Parkways) |

Olmstead and other planners of that era thought that parks should offset the "Physical Ill of City's Congestion, Hurry, and Noise;" provide a soothing, edifying effect; create opportunities for people of all classes to meet and mingle in casual friendliness; and bring people together with a common purpose, each person adding to pleasure of others by their mere presence.

Ultimately, though "Grand" park planning did not continue through the 20th century. The demise of the City Beautiful movement occurred for several reasons, including:

- C The high cost of implementation;
- C The mood of the country - World War I, Prohibition, Great Depression;
- C A revolution in personal transportation, followed by urban sprawl;
- C An emphasis on highway system free of streetcars, buses, and trucks;
- C Quantitative standards replacing qualitative;
- C An emphasis on business;
- C A legal approach to city planning instead of featuring an urban design approach; and
- C The social and political heritage of rugged individualism - Large scale plans are difficult to carry out.

What are the reasons for a return to "Grand Planning?"

- C Realization that the high cost adds comparable value to the community
- C Desire for better quality of life and the recognition of the link between quality of life and the future of economic development
- C Improved outlook on the future (e.g. *Vision 20/20* effort)
- C Desire for access to nearby parks, open space, and greenways
- C Traffic congestion - desire for alternative modes of transportation
- C Building a stronger sense of community
- C Need to maximize use of tax dollars
- C Protection of natural resources

The Vision

Springfield's early parks were planned and built in the tradition of the City Beautiful movement that was associated with the "Grand Plans." However, like the rest of the country, Springfield felt the demise of Grand Planning. The community wanted more activities in parks other than civic architecture, grand open spaces, and passive recreation. In an attempt to reach a balance in Grand Planning, there was an increased effort to provide recreational activities for the community. Both facility construction and participation in active recreational programs grew rapidly throughout the country as well as in Springfield. The participation in activities such as baseball, softball, tennis, and golf activities also generated revenue through user fees, something the passive parks and

grand open spaces could not do. As recreation activities moved to the forefront of the park system the acquisition and setting aside of passive park land has diminished.

Vision 20/20 participants envision a balanced park system - a return to providing passive parks and open spaces while continuing our outstanding active recreation program. They also envision a system of parks connected by natural drainage corridors (greenways) that will one day adorn the Springfield-Greene County landscape.

This vision was developed through an extensive public planning process. Through this process 12 citizen-run Focus Groups were formed with 350 people to discuss the Comprehensive Plan and the specific plan elements, including Parks, Open Space and Greenways plan element, for 1 ½ years. In addition to the focus groups, a community fair was held (VisionFest), video programs ran on public television providing information and soliciting input, two community surveys were conducted, and many other public meetings were held for a truly interactive, citizen-based planning process.

Residents expressed the desire throughout the *Vision 20/20* process for a park system that provides linear parks and connections throughout the community. They envisioned a system of parks using the natural drainage patterns to provide a perimeter system of green that connects parks and significant natural resources. *Vision 20/20* participants believed that the park system should meet the varied needs of the community by providing neighborhood, community, citywide/special use, and regional parks, connected as much as possible by the greenway system and in conjunction with other public facilities. One of the most consistent themes throughout the public process was the need for a significant park system that provides natural beauty and protection, connections, trails and paths, and helps build a sense of community. This park plan, along with the other plan elements of *Vision 20/20*, serves to articulate this vision and identify the steps necessary to carry it out. The document will show how this dream can come true with dedication, a strong public spirit, and necessary resources.

Some of this vision will not be fully realized within the planning period of 2020. This vision takes a much longer view into the future and may not be completed for several generations. It will take a long time to acquire the land and build all of these facilities. However, it is important that we begin *now* to *place policies into effect* that will preserve undeveloped corridors and tracts of land needed to develop a significant parks, open space and greenway system and fulfill the community's dream.

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2. Foundation of The Plan: Theme, Pattern, and Principles

Throughout the *Vision 20/20* process there have been similar ideas and concepts that have appeared in each of the Focus Groups. These “themes” are the common threads for the entire process and are also significant to the Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Element. Each of the following themes can be applied to the park system.

- C The *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways* concept was the one major theme identified by every Focus Group. Additional parks, greenways, trails, and preserved open space and trees were desired as a necessary component of the community’s future development pattern.
- C Providing *Quality Design* in public and private development.
- C Creating a stronger *Sense of Place* with *Unique Qualities*.
- C Promote *Environmental Stewardship* and *Energy Efficiency* to protect and enhance the natural environment while taking steps to efficiently utilize our energy resources in autos, building practices, land use management, etc.
- C Providing a *Sense of Community* by making decisions in the public interest and caring for the community.
- C Ensuring an area of the community that comprises *higher densities, mixed use, transit, pedestrian and bicycle* facilities, was expressed in conjunction with offering the opportunity to live near shopping, work, and public facilities.
- C *Revitalize, maintain, and re-use the existing city*; particularly creating a *vital center city*.
- C Provide a *safe community*.

Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Goal

The process, ideas, and vision summarized above are expressed as the goal for future parks, open space, and greenways in Springfield and Greene County in the following statement:

To create a safe, accessible, comprehensive system of parks, open space, and greenways with sufficient land and facilities that connect selected public and private spaces while preserving the natural environment.

The Parks, Open Space, and Greenways element of *Vision 20/20* describes the proposed method of meeting this goal. Implementation of this element of the plan will require the participation and dedication of all segments of the community working in concert with city and county government.

Community As A Park - The Pattern of Parks, Open Space, and Greenways

Critical to the success of the park system plan is its power to influence the structuring of urban land use patterns. Within this *community as a park* all human needs such as housing, employment, commerce, education, transportation, preservation, conservation,

and recreation occur in rational and harmonious patterns which respect and enhance the landscape. The *community as a park* concept supports quality of life, community sustainability, and complementary property relationships which enhance individual and community wealth and prosperity. Essentially, the park system must be designed in a way that moves the community into a development mind-set that embraces the fundamental proposition that the *entire community is a park*.

In order to develop the concept of "community as a park," the pattern of the park system must be designed to structure urban land use in a rational and harmonious manner on the foundation of the open space system. The open space system is comprised of parks, greenways, pathways, sensitive and significant features, and open land. The pattern includes:

- C Existing and future parks;
- C The street and parkway system;
- C Utility easements;
- C The drainageways forming the basis for the greenways;
- C Lakes;
- C Significant and sensitive natural features;
- C Schools;
- C Other public land;
- C Open space; and
- C Private recreation land.

These lands and facilities form a pattern that helps define the physical community. Existing and future parks located strategically throughout the community provide land for recreation and open space. Greenways provide pathways, open space, and hiking and biking opportunities along diverse corridors within the community linking many of the parks and open spaces with each other and residents. School land, City Utilities land, and other public land also serve people as parks and open space in the system. As development occurs, it should be built in concert with the park, open space, and greenway system, connecting people's living and working environments with the open space system. The most important element in this pattern is the greenway system. Greenways are critical in providing the paths and connections within the system and are the "thread" that binds the entire community together.

Community As A Park Recommendations

- C View the entire community as a park. Establish the park and greenway pattern and build the community upon this framework.
- C Continually update the parks, open space, and greenways system plan to ensure these facilities are planned in advance of development.
- C Adopt policies and ordinances that consider parks and greenways when acquiring land, obtaining easements, or making public improvements.

Environmental Considerations

Throughout the *Vision 20/20* planning process, citizens have expressed their desire that future development of the community meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Thus, a high quality of life for all people in the community is the Plan's central purpose.

The park system can provide the "thread" that binds our relationship with the natural environment in the urban setting. As land is developed, the parks system is the means for providing the structure to preserve land for environmental and recreational purposes. The park system can preserve many of the significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and provide visual buffering. These lands consist of sites exhibiting significant or sensitive natural resources such as:

- C unusual geological features
- C springs
- C caves
- C forest lands
- C wildlife habitat
- C viewsheds

In addition, lands that are unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential include steep slopes, drainageways, flood plains, and sink holes.

Land and natural resources that are outside the scope of the park system should also be preserved as open space to enhance the livability and character of the community by preserving as many of its natural amenities as possible. This can be accomplished through careful and insightful regulation of development to preserve natural resources and open space. Efforts should be coordinated with other natural resource agencies including the Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, among others.

As these resources are linked and intertwined within the park system, they provide a respite from urban living and offer recreational opportunity. This intertwining is what helps to create the concept of the community-as-park; the integration of the human element with that of the surrounding natural environment.

Environmental Considerations Recommendations

- C Protect stream corridors and significant natural features and resources.
- C Foster cooperative arrangements with other agencies and organizations to accomplish park, open space, and greenway environmental objectives.
- C Preserve the natural landscape in stream corridors and around significant natural features.
- C Discourage the channelization of stream corridors.
- C Encourage the dedication of floodplain land during the subdivision process to develop the conservation network.
- C Revise existing ordinances to prohibit the platting of lots or construction of structures within the F.E.M.A. designated 100-year floodplain.
- C Revise existing ordinances to prohibit the location of stormwater management facilities on platted residential lots.
- C Employ the most appropriate methods of environmental protection and energy efficiency possible when constructing or rehabilitating buildings or facilities, to include park facilities. For example:
 - C utilize constructed wetlands, when appropriate, to treat storm water runoff;
 - C provide advanced energy efficiency in building construction;

- C provide natural or native vegetation (as opposed to exotic vegetation) in landscaping; and
 - C minimize the use of irrigation, pesticides, and herbicides.
- C Provide environmental education materials and programs in parks.
- C Actively promote environmental education to residents, businesses and industries throughout the community. Educate the community on positive environmental practices in their everyday lives.
- C Improve and expand the recycling efforts within the community. Develop quality recycling drop off facilities and ensure placement of recycling facilities in all public places, including high traffic areas. The public sector should set the standard when it comes to environmental responsibility and recycling efforts in the community.
- C Promote the redevelopment of former or polluted “brownfield” industrial sites in the industrial area. Specifically redevelop and create new park land in the Jordan Creek Valley.
- C Develop ways to connect residential developments to parks utilizing trails or natural drainage patterns as much as possible.

Social Considerations

As communities developed across our country the town square, often containing a park, and main street were integral components of the physical community landscape. These features helped to create a “sense of place” and identity for citizens of the community. A central place to meet, greet and exchange news and socialize with each other was a part of daily routine.

As small towns grew to cities and cities spawned suburbs, the loss of a central community “place” has become extinct. Main street, the town square and local barber shop have been replaced with strip malls and mega retail outlets. The one element of a community neighborhood which continues to remain constant is our community park lands. Throughout history citizens have taken great pride in their local parks and demand for protection increases incrementally every time local park lands or open spaces are threatened. A leading indicator in the quality of life and community image of cities is increasingly perceived as the way in which a community treats its parks, open spaces and natural features. In many cases, an important criteria for business relocation or expansion to communities is the park and recreational opportunities for company employees.

Recreational experience is universally recognized as one of the basic needs in human life. When a need is identified and deemed significant to society, then governmental authority, as well as private and philanthropic enterprise, enter to help administer such needs for the mutual benefit and welfare of all concerned. It is well known that recreational activity is an aspect of life of such importance that modern society would suffer an inestimable loss without such a mode of expression. (*Principles and Practices of Recreation Service*, Jay S. Shivery, University of Connecticut, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1967.)

Research shows that youth participation in sports, or pursuit of a special interest or hobby can redirect negative activity into positive outcomes for the community. The social implications of involving youth at an early age in positive and meaningful activities could impact the community resources spent on the administration of our criminal correction system.

Regardless of one's age, status, or position in the community, local community-serving parks play a role in a person's attitudes and perceptions of the community. A poorly maintained or vandalized park may convey a message of disrespect and negative images of how the community as a whole values a particular neighborhood. However, a well designed clean and safe park environment sends a message of self-worth, positive community values respect for property and fellow citizens.

Parks provide for the involvement of citizens throughout one's life. From your first baby carriage ride through a neighborhood park, to a brisk walk in your later years or the fellowship of friends and family at a picnic reunion parks serve the entire community.

Shared Use Principle

The shared use concept was proposed in the *Vision 20/20* focus groups and was expressed in the responses from a community parks survey. The result of this discussion is that it is incumbent upon all public agencies to maximize the use of their land and facilities. The best way to do this is to share with each other. The same citizens pay for public land and facilities and are entitled to use them to the maximum extent possible. Therefore, the shared use concept is based on the belief that efficiency and improved quality of life will be gained by the sharing of public land and facilities.

Schools can serve neighborhood or community recreational needs in conjunction with the Parks Department. Library branches can be located within community centers. Fire stations could contain community meeting facilities. These are examples of the shared use principle in which the use of public land and facilities can be expanded through the use of joint use agreements between agencies. While there are instances, especially in recent years, where the shared use concept is occurring, this practice should become the norm instead of the exception.

Joint Use Agreement. The first step toward implementing the Shared Use Principle is to execute joint use agreements between the public entities involved. The agreement should define the responsibilities of properties, facilities, and resources to be jointly used. A joint-use agreement should also define how the property and facilities will be acquired, developed, improved, managed, programmed, and maintained. Liability for the participating agencies must be included in the joint-use agreement.

Proposed Shared Use Facilities. Land, facilities, and resources should be shared between public agencies including but not limited to City Utilities, the Fire Department, the Public Works Department, the Springfield-Greene County Library, Springfield-Greene County Park Board, and the Springfield Public School System.

School-Parks The school-park concept was recommended in the 1976 *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* and the subsequent 1979 standards. This concept encourages the joint use of property between the City and Public School System for park and recreation purposes. A school-park is described as:

A facility which combines a park, a school, a playground and other recreation facilities into a single unit for education, recreation, and related social and community activities. The result is more than simply the concentration of these facilities on a single site. It is a functional unit designed to include mutually supportive programs of education, recreation, and community activities.

The Parks Department and Springfield Public Schools can share the cost of playground equipment since each normally provide these facilities, and the Parks

Department can add picnicking, walking trails, tennis courts, etc. and help manage the "park."

School-Park Recommendations

- C Fully utilize designated schools for park and recreation use.
- C Acquisition of land for new schools should include additional land for park activities.
- C Existing schools designated as school-parks should be redeveloped as one site. If necessary acquire additional land around existing schools to provide adequate park land.
- C Establish a general use agreement between the City and Public School System for scope, commitments, procedures, and guidelines for the school-park concept.
- C Review and update the school-park locations on an annual basis.
- C Develop an implementation program for the proposed school-parks. Review and update the implementation priorities annually.
- C Develop a site plan for all proposed school-park sites.
- C Develop a maintenance program for the proposed school-parks between the Springfield Greene County Park Board and the Springfield Public School System.

City Utilities. As a public utility, City Utilities owns considerable land with park, open space, and greenway potential. Some of the land is already used for recreation, but there are many more possibilities.

The greatest potential for shared use of City Utilities property is within the greenway system. As a part of the natural drainage system, Lake Springfield, Fellows and McDaniel Lakes, Valley Water Mill and Fulbright Spring can be integral to the greenway system and function as community or special use parks. The unique environmental features and water bodies allow potential opportunities for trails, nature study and interpretation, camping and lodging facilities, wildlife management, boating, and fishing.

City Utilities Recommendations

- C Develop a management agreement between the Park Board and City Utilities for the maintenance and management of City Utilities property that is incorporated into the park, open space, and greenway system.
- C Assess City Utilities future property acquisition and redevelopment of existing facilities for incorporation into the park, open space, and greenway system.
- C Incorporate Fellows Lake and McDaniel Lake into the Little Sac River Greenway.
- C Incorporate Lake Springfield into the James River Greenway.
- C Incorporate Valley Water Mill and Fulbright Spring into the South Dry Sac River Greenway.

Other Public Land. The city owns land throughout the community; some of which is appropriate for recreation. The Southwest Sewage Treatment property is already serving a multi-use function by hosting nature trails and the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway. The Airport is the site of cross-country track meets and hosts Springfield's Fourth of July celebration - Firefall. Community Centers, Libraries, Fire Stations, Public Works facilities and properties and other public land can and should share facilities and property where possible.

Other Public Land Recommendations

- C Inventory and analyze all public facilities and property for multiple uses, including uses in the parks, open space, and greenway system.
- C Assess public land and facilities for inclusion into the parks, open space, and greenway system, as public lands are acquired, new facilities developed, or existing properties redeveloped.
- C Establish an agreement with State and Federal Agencies to coordinate the development, acquisition, and interpretation of facilities and properties.

It is incumbent upon all governmental entities to provide an efficient use of public facilities through shared and multiple use. The school system, city, county, public utility, library district, park board, etc. must continue to work together to share land and facilities and carry out the integrated nature of the *Vision 20/20* Comprehensive Plan.

Regional Perspective

The proposed Springfield-Greene County park system will make a significant impact in our region in the years to come if implemented according to this plan. The proposed system will impact economic development and the overall quality of life of everyone in Greene County and surrounding counties. The extensive system of greenways, trails, lakes, parks, and open space will be a supplement and alternative to the already significant tourism industry in the region.

Springfield is blessed to have several local recreation facilities that are assets to the community as well as the region. Dickerson Park Zoo, Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, Cooper/Killian Sports Complex, and our three public Golf Courses serve as community and regional assets. In fact, the sports and recreation components of our park system have been a state and national force for many years. Because of this, Springfield has been able to attract a professional tennis team, the Springfield Lasers, and continually hosts large amateur and collegiate tournaments at the state and national level.

It is recognized that attracting and hosting national and regional tournaments and franchise teams is an important component of the Parks Department and the economic vitality of the community. The prestige and wealth brought to the community by these activities is unquestionable. These are highly specialized and enterprising endeavors which require knowledge and skills outside the normal provision of park facilities and activities for the community. However, marketing and promotion of these recreation and park facilities should be done in a comprehensive manner with other public and private tourism facilities. This comprehensive approach to attracting visitors through promotion of the park system will pay off in providing dollars for the local economy as well as improving the quality of life for residents. The economic development approach also emphasizes a major element of this plan, viewing the entire “*Community As A Park*.”

Regional Perspective Recommendations

- C Prepare special plans to address the location, design, and management of Franchise Team Facilities and National/Regional Tournament Facilities.
- C Continually update master plans for regional attractions and major facilities in an effort to recognize the importance of these activities as regional points of interest.
- C Prepare a report to identify the economic impacts that the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System has on tourism and economic development in the urbanized area of Springfield. Include the role of tournaments as well as regional serving facilities and services that contribute to Springfield’s tourism industry.

3. Park Needs Assessment, Planning Guidelines, and Classification System

Purpose

The purpose of the parks needs assessment is to clarify the relevant issues facing the development of the parks, open space, and greenways systems. Any subsequent recommendations for future system or facility improvements are based on this assessment.

Park land need is assessed from several perspectives.

- C The need to provide a framework for future development of the community.
- C The need to connect various components of the park system and other activity nodes of the community.
- C The need to protect significant natural resources.
- C The need to preserve open space.

Changing demographic, economic, and social conditions must be accounted for in assessing park land needs for the future. The qualitative needs of the park system must be balanced with the quantitative measures of need. The *qualitative* aspects of the park system are the preservation of natural landscapes, connecting the community and the park system, and taking advantage of resources to provide parks that may not fit the standards. *Quantitative* measures are the determinants of need based on guidelines for the provision of park land and facilities.

Evaluation of the Existing Park System

An evaluation of the existing park system, including each park was performed in conjunction with *Vision 20/20*. The park system was assessed to determine if the system was comprehensive, cohesive, evenly distributed, and accessible. A map of the existing system is shown on Figure 1.

In Springfield-Greene County, park land need was assessed using the following resources and perspectives:

- C *Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment for Greene County, Missouri*, 1992;
- C *Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines*, National Recreation and Parks Association, (NRPA) 1996;
- C *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*, NRPA, 1983;
- C *Springfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, 1976;
- C *Springfield Park and Open Space Standards*, 1979;
- C *The 1994 Springfield Area Planning Survey*;
- C *The 1996 Springfield Area Park Survey*;
- C *Vision 20/20* Focus Group Assessments;
- C Visual Assessment of the Park System; and
- C Public demand on the Current Park System.

In addition to determining if the park system was comprehensive and evenly distributed, it was necessary to inventory and evaluate the physical conditions of the existing park and recreation facilities. The *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation* revealed both the strengths and the weaknesses of the current park system. A copy of this document is found in Appendix A. A brief summary of the strengths and weaknesses is summarized below.

The weaknesses of the system include:

- C Lack of neighborhood and community parks on the south side of the urban area.
- C Siting quality of many neighborhood parks. Many parks are located behind houses with only one or two sides open to the public.
- C Lack of connections to and between parks through greenways and pathways.
- C Lack of coordination between all public agencies.
- C Lack of preserving historic character within the older parks.

The strengths of the park system include:

- C City-wide parks such as Dickerson Park Zoo, Ritter Springs, and Nathanael Greene.
- C Sports facilities such as Cooper/Killian, Gillenwaters, and Meador.
- C Older Neighborhood and Community Parks such as Washington, Phelps Grove, Sequiota, and Doling.

Summary of Park Land Needs

Using the *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation* and the other references listed above, some major needs have been identified. These needs include the following:

- C A system of greenways and connective trails throughout the urbanized area to link parks to each other and the community.
- C The preservation of significant natural resources, sensitive environmental features, and open spaces to provide natural beauty and sustainability in our community.
- C Providing additional community-wide and regional-serving parks that provide a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities.
- C Providing additional neighborhood-serving parks in unserved areas throughout the community
- C Certain Special Use Facilities, such as ice skating, farmer's market, family-oriented recreation centers and aquatic centers
- C A "signature" or "central" park that would be a gathering place for a variety of civic events and provide an identity or focal point for our community.

Park Planning Guidelines

Park planning guidelines are essential in determining the minimum acceptable park and recreation facilities for the community. A guideline is an acceptable measure of delivery for parks, open space, and greenways. Through the use of guidelines, a community can achieve an equal distribution of parks and open space throughout the community and at a level of service desired by its citizens. These park planning guidelines allow the evaluation of park and open space needs so they may be accommodated within the community-wide park system. For instance, a guideline might be that the community provide 10 acres of park land for every 1000 people. Within this context, the amount of

neighborhood, community, and other classifications of park land is established and measured to determine success in providing the land. The guideline should relate to the real needs in the community for recreation land and facilities.

The park planning guidelines should:

- C Be practical and achievable.
- C Provide for an equitable allocation of park and recreation resources throughout the community.
- C Reflect the needs of the citizens for park and recreation opportunities.

The need for neighborhood or community park land can be established through observing guidelines, but open space or natural resource protection should not be equated with a numerical standard of any kind.

The *Vision 20/20* approach to guidelines parallels closely with the 1996 National Recreation and Parks Association Guidelines. Through focus groups, community meetings, surveys, and the use of the adopted standards, a plan for parks, open space, and greenways has been developed and articulated in this document. In the tradition of the "Grand Plan," it is largely qualitative rather than quantitative, it relies on connectivity, sharing land and facilities between public organizations, and is responsive to the needs of neighborhoods.

Classification System

The classification system categorizes parks, open space, and greenways in accordance with their role in the park system. For instance, neighborhood parks provide land and facilities to serve needs as identified in the guidelines. Sports complexes address the need for competitive and recreational activities. Open space and greenways are provided to protect natural resources and connect various components of the community. In 1979, the *Park and Open Space Standards* were adopted by the Park Board as a companion to the 1976 *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. These are the guidelines in place as the parks were improved and built since 1979. The *Park and Open Space Standards* are discussed in detail in the *Background, Analysis, and Issue Identification* report prepared for *Vision 20/20* earlier in the process.

Proposed Park, Open Space, and Greenways Classification System and Guidelines. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) published planning guidelines in 1983 and 1996. The 1983 Guidelines were rather prescriptive in that they recommended specific amounts and classifications of park land and facilities in relation to the population of the community. In this regard, they were very similar to the 1979 *Park and Open Space Standards*. The *Background, Analysis, and Issue Identification* report for *Vision 20/20* expands on the comparison of the national and local guidelines.

Today park planning philosophy has changed. In 1996, the NRPA attempted to provide "the best guidance possible for all communities regardless of size that they may work within their own unique social, economic, and institutional structure to provide the park, recreation, and open space system that is best for their community and is within their economic and financial capacity."

This shift in philosophy is due to several reasons, some of them listed below:

- C An explosion of interest among citizen groups in preserving community open lands such as wetlands, flood plains, foothills, forests, and prairies for purposes of environmental protection and "green recreation," which is passive in nature and requires little in the way of facility development.
- C The expansion of service delivery responsibilities, including protecting and programming elements of the community's historical, cultural, and natural heritage.
- C The growth of public-private partnerships to provide both active park and recreation facilities as well as community open lands. For example, a community floodplain greenbelt program can be justified by its enhancement of the value of adjacent private property.
- C A significant growth in new state and local government environmental legislation.
- C A demand from all sectors of the community for equity and uniform quality in the provision of park and recreation resources, facilities, and programs. A rational planning guideline provides a procedure for addressing these concerns.
- C A shift in planning to a process which provides a wider range of opportunities for citizens to become active stakeholders in their community and more involved in the decision making process.
- C A growing recognition that recreation demand is often met by a host of providers.
- C A shift away from reliance on an absolute national standard, i.e. the long standing notion of 10 acres/1000 persons, to increasing community self-direction where the number of acres for park and recreation land is based on what the citizens determine is best for themselves.
- C A recognition that in many communities there may be more citizen interest in open space preservation and nature-based recreation than in the more traditional menu of activities.

The purpose of the 1996 NRPA Guidelines is "to provide a model for applying a systems approach to the planning for parks, recreation, open space, and pathways. This approach includes a level of service guideline that is needs based, facilities driven, and land measured."

The Level of Service Guideline is a ratio expressed as acres/1000 population which represents the minimum amount of ground space needed to meet recreation demands of the citizens of a community. The Level of Service Guideline is dependent upon estimates of usage and demand on existing parks and extrapolating the demand and usage forward to be applied to new components of the park system.

Thus, the 1996 NRPA Guidelines are not a table of standards to follow, but a procedure on how each community should assess its needs and demand and create its own unique approach to the provision of parks, open space, and greenways. The proposed system of Classifications and Guidelines is intended to provide guidance in assuring that the entire community is served with a wide range of park land and recreational opportunity as well as natural areas and greenways. The classification system and associated guidelines ensure that a systematic approach is taken throughout the community. Table 1, below, provides the suggested classification for the Springfield-Greene County Parks, Open Space, and Greenways System that incorporates the 1979 *Park and Open Space Standards*, the 1996 NRPA *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*, and experience from *Vision 20/20* public involvement.

Table 1

Park, Open Space, and Greenway System 1998 Classification and Guidelines					
Classification	General Description	Size Range	Service Area	Population Served	Example
Greenway	Effectively link park system components together to form a continuous park environment,	Natural drainageways	Not applicable	Entire Community	South Creek/ Wilsons Creek
Mini-Park	Used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.	Between 2,500 sq.ft. and 5 acres	Adjacent residential area	Up to 1,500	Champion
Neighborhood Park	To provide informal active and passive recreation facilities for all ages within normal walking distance.	Between 3 and 20 acres	½ to 1 mile distance	1,500 to 5,000	Silver Springs
School-Park	Combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks.	Between 3 and 20 acres	Depends on function	Depends on function	Cowden
Urban Community Park	Meet the active and passive community-based recreation needs as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	10-50 acres	½ to 3 miles	Up to 20,000	Doling
Metropolitan Community Park	Meet the community-based recreation needs as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	50-200 acres or more	3 miles or more	10,000 to 50,000	Ritter Springs
Special Use Parks and Facilities	To provide certain special recreation facilities of value to all citizens within the community.	50-150 acres	30 min. driving time	Entire Community	Dickerson Park Zoo
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	25-80 acres	30 min. driving time	50,000	Cooper / Killian Complex
Civic Park	To provide a focal point and gathering place for the community. A place to locate unique and one-of-a-kind community facilities.	200 acres or more	Regional	Entire Community and tourist population	
Natural Resource Area Parks	Lands set aside for preservation and interpretation of significant natural resources.	Variable	Variable	Entire Community	George Washington Carver

adapted from 1996 NRPA Parks Open Space and Pathways Classifications Table

Trail Classification and Guidelines

The Trail Classification and Guidelines are intended to provide guidance in assuring that adequate and appropriate trails and paths are provided for to serve each park or greenway corridor. The classification system and associated guidelines ensure that a systematic approach is taken to the planning and development of trails and paths for the Parks, Open Space, and Greenways System. Below is the suggested classification for the Springfield-

Greene County Parks, Open Space, and Greenways System that incorporates the 1996 NRPA *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* and experience from *Vision 20/20* public involvement.

Table 2

Park, Open Space, and Greenway System 1998 Trail Classification and Guidelines			
Classification	General Description	Description of Each Type	Example
Park Trail	Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks, and natural resource areas. Focus is on recreational value and harmony with natural environment.	<p>Type I: Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists.</p> <p>Type II: Multipurpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists.</p> <p>Type III: Nature trails for pedestrians. May be hard or soft-surfaced.</p>	<p>Cooper Park (Type I)</p> <p>South Creek Greenway (Type II)</p> <p>Nature Center (Type III)</p>
Connector Trails	Multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as recreation.	<p>Type I: Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists located in independent r.o.w.(e.g. old rail corridor)</p> <p>Type II: Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists.(Typically within road r.o.w.)</p>	Frisco Highline Trail
On-Street Bikeways	Paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	<p>Bike Route: Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential or exclusive use of bicycles.</p> <p>Bike Lane: Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders.</p>	None
All-Terrain Bike Trail	Off-road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes.	Single-purpose loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas.	Sac River Mountain Bike Trail
Equestrian Trail	Trails developed for horseback riding.	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas. Sometimes developed as multipurpose with hiking and all-terrain biking where conflicts can be managed.	Frisco Highline Trail

adapted from 1996 NRPA Parks Open Space and Pathways Classifications Table

Classification and Guidelines Recommendations

- C Implement the guidelines and classification system as described in Tables 1 and 2, above.
- C Continually assess the guidelines to ensure they are appropriate for community needs.

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4. The Plan

The first three chapters of this element, along with the *Vision 20/20* background analysis and Park Evaluation contain the philosophy and guidelines necessary as a foundation for the Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan. A result of the background information, philosophy and guidelines, there are recommendations for changes to existing parks, as well as for new parks, open space, and greenways.

The *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan Element* lays the groundwork for continuation of a good park system. It recommends improvements to existing parks, creation of new parks in un-served built-up areas, and proposes new parks in future development areas and within the perimeter greenway system surrounding the community.

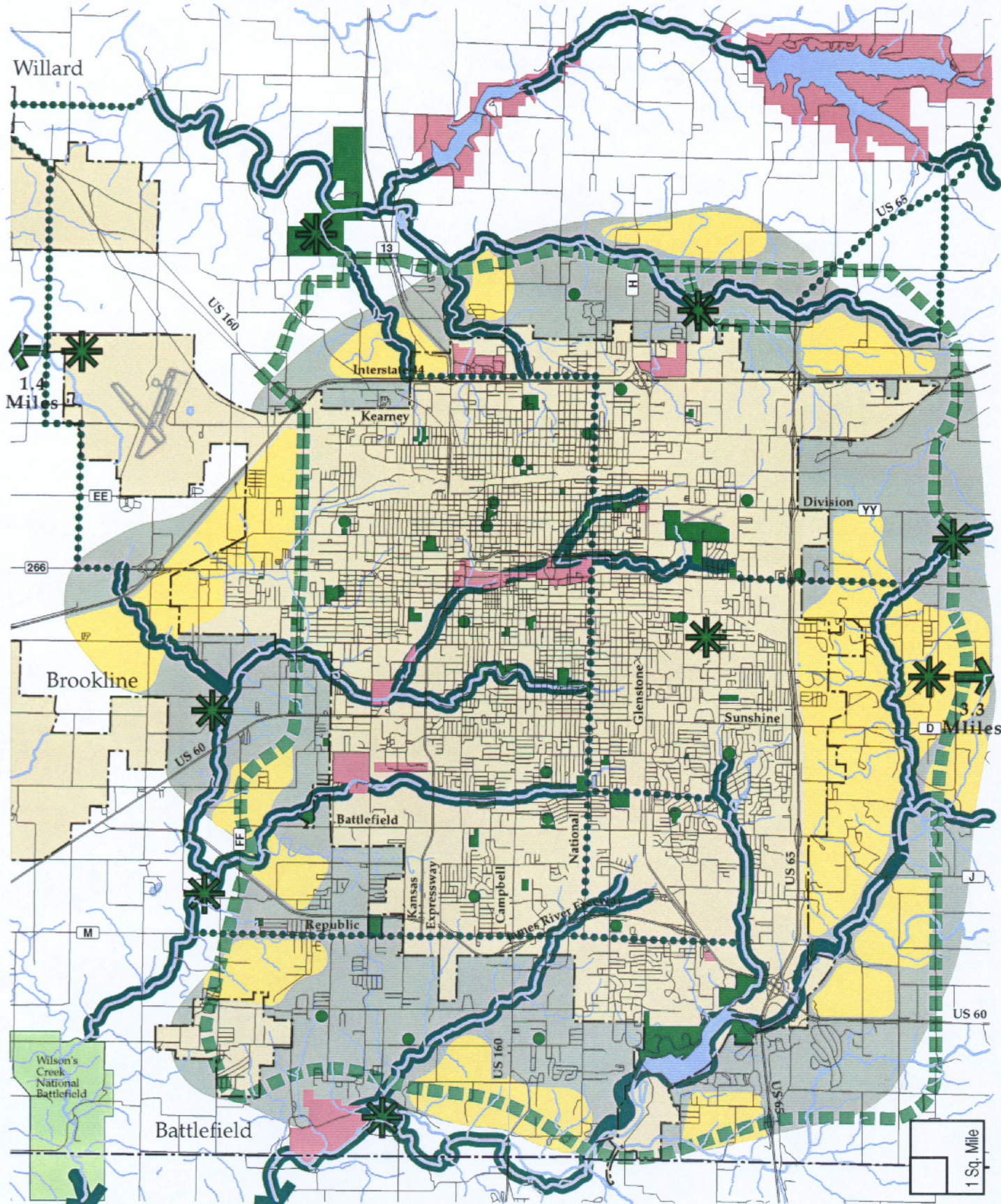
The next section of this document includes three major sections:

The Greenway System

The Park System

The Open Space System

The Greenways System section introduces greenways as providing the framework and linkages necessary to create a unified Parks, Open Space, and Greenways System. The Park System section addresses the role, character, and recommendations for each park classification as well as existing or proposed parks in the system. The Open Space System section discusses the role of open space and natural features and how to utilize these spaces in the best and most efficient manner for public enjoyment. Figure 2 indicates the proposed Park, Open Space, and Greenway System.



South Creek-Wilsons Creek Greenway connects to James River Greenway

- ★ Parks
- Special Use Parks and Facilities
- ~ Greenways
- ... Greenway Connections
- Parkway (Conceptual)
- Future Growth Area
- City Boundary
- Park Search Area

Figure 2

Springfield-Greene County Park, Open Space, and Greenway System Plan



**Springfield-Greene County
Comprehensive Plan**

5. Greenway System

Definition

Greenways are linear parks that protect and enhance a corridor of land and may provide for multiple uses including open space preservation, stormwater management and recreation.

Greenways also provide many valuable functions, such as:

- C Promoting the strategic use of flood-prone lands for an open space corridor system.
- C Establishing a linear park network, left primarily in its natural state.
- C Retaining natural ecological functions and preserving sensitive natural features in the urban environment.
- C Improving water quality by buffering streams and trapping pollutants.
- C Softening urban and suburban landscapes with ribbons of green.
- C Connecting people, communities, and the countryside.
- C Providing refuge and safe migration routes for wildlife.
- C Preserving the biological diversity of plant and animal species by connecting isolated natural areas.
- C Providing alternative transportation modes and serving as traffic-free (or reduced traffic) routes to and from schools and parks.
- C Linking important cultural and historic sites.
- C Reducing flood damage and help recharge underground water supplies.
- C Directing development and growth away from environmentally sensitive areas.
- C Acting as outdoor classrooms.
- C Becoming sanctuaries of calm to escape the stress of modern life.
- C Encouraging economic development by increasing property values of adjacent land and generating tourism income.

When defining a greenway, it is important to distinguish between a *greenway* and a *trail*. If a greenway is considered a trail, the trail then becomes the focus of consideration and effort to the exclusion of the greenway. As defined above, a greenway is a corridor of land that is protected or managed in some manner and generally follows a natural stream or drainageway. The greenway protects the open space within a defined distance either side of the stream. A greenway may, or may not have a trail within the corridor.

A trail is a pathway allowing public movement. A trail can be within a greenway, along a street, or anywhere a pathway is desired. When a trail is located within a greenway, access is gained by people who can enjoy the greenway more closely. A trail is generally an important component of an urban greenway, such as the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway and is often included in rural greenways. While trails are also important in linking people and greenways, there may be places where it is desirable to preserve and manage a corridor without encouraging public access. Where trails are provided the level of public access may also vary. Some trails may be paved, twelve feet (12') wide multi-purpose surfaces, while some may be wood-chip hiking paths through the woods.

Each greenway segment should be evaluated for appropriate uses within the corridor and plans made accordingly. The evaluation should consider all of the benefits of a greenway such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, endangered plant protection, existing land ownership, etc. before making a determination regarding trails and public access. Some corridors may not include plans for public access immediately, but may propose trails for the long-range future of the greenway.

History of Greenways Planning in Springfield and Greene County

The first plan to include greenways in the Springfield area was the 1964 Springfield Comprehensive Plan. The planners recognized the benefits that greenways provide and the importance of reserving land before it is lost to development. Again in 1976, the Springfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan included greenways. These early plans were not carried out partially because there was a perception that the plans were too ambitious and expensive. Other contributing factors included a lack of a "sense of urgency" about preserving the stream corridors and open spaces, lack of interest in trail development, the lack of citizen involvement, and the lack of an organized citizen movement.

In 1991, a plan for the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway was completed through a joint effort between city, county, state, and federal agencies as well as private citizens. Subsequently, Ozark Greenways, Inc., a not-for-profit citizens organization was formed in 1991 to promote greenways throughout the region. The first newsletter published by Ozark Greenways in 1992 showed a proposed greenway system throughout the Springfield area that followed natural drainageways.

The *Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan for the Fassnight Drainage Basin* completed in 1990 also proposed a conceptual system of greenways. In 1992, Greene County sponsored the *Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment for Greene County* which recommended working with the city to develop greenways. Walking, biking, and greenways were among the highest ranked recreation needs in the assessment.

Proposed Greenway System

The proposed greenway system is similar to previous proposals. The greenways will follow natural drainageways, to the extent possible, and be connected with trails and bikeways where the natural drainageways are not connected. The proposed greenway system, utilizing the natural drainageways and abandoned railroad corridors is 130 miles in length and provides the underlying framework of the future park system. In addition to greenway corridors, this plan proposes approximately 25 miles of trail connections. These trail connections provide continuity within the greenway system by utilizing existing streets, roads, alleys, etc., and allowing the pedestrian and cyclist to travel from one greenway to another. To complete these connections some modifications to existing facilities will be necessary. These modifications could include bike lanes, separated trails and pathways, signage and other measures to ensure a safe and functional trail connection. The proposed greenway system and trail connections are shown on Figure 3.

The greenway element of the plan is very long-range in nature and could take several decades to fully implement. It is proposed that the greenway system influence and shape our community's future development patterns by preserving drainage corridors and open space before development occurs. Therefore, it is important to place the policies in effect now, that will begin the process. Land will be acquired in a variety of ways including donation, dedication through the platting process, easement, land trust, and purchase. When property is developed along a prospective greenway, at a minimum the floodplain should be dedicated to the city or county for eventual inclusion into the greenway system. As other land becomes available through donation or conservation easement, there must be a mechanism to receive the donation and maintain the land. Some sections of the greenway should be targeted as projects that are diligently pursued until completion, such as the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway. While other sections will fall into place over time.

Conservation Network

The primary greenway system is the identified 130 mile network of major natural drainageways in the metropolitan area. In addition, there are also many other minor natural drainageways which feed the major ones to complete the entire natural drainage system. These minor drainageways should be preserved to the maximum extent possible as land is developed and redeveloped. If properly planned, a large open space network could be completed connecting people to other parts of the community.

As each new subdivision is developed, it should include plans for continuing the open space network by assuring that sufficient and appropriate open space is allocated for connection to adjacent subdivisions. The open space could remain under private ownership and managed by the homeowners organization or a local land trust. Selected portions of the network could be transferred to public ownership for connection to the greenway system.

To accomplish this network, a change in the way we view residential development must occur. The drainageways must be considered assets to the future living environment. When new subdivisions are planned, the drainageway should be designated for preservation as well as other unbuildable land. Next, house sites should be selected, streets and footpaths aligned, and finally, the lot lines defined. In this manner, quality living environments can be established, natural resources can be protected, stormwater can be more effectively managed, and people can be connected to one another through the natural drainageways.

The Role of Ozark Greenways

Ozark Greenways, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization charged with facilitating the provision of greenways in the Springfield area. As a private organization, Ozark Greenways has some advantages over a public body. These include:

- C Ability to react quickly to greenway opportunities.
- C Ability to raise private funds to support greenway expansion.
- C Ability to promote and raise awareness about the virtues of greenways throughout the community.
- C Ability to serve as a land trust by working with land owners for property acquisition and by managing land prior to greenway development. A land trust combines the

- C efforts of private land owners, the land trust organization, and the government entity to achieve conservation and sustainable economic goals of each. This can be accomplished through conservation easements, donation, bargain sale, conservation directed life estates, living trusts, bequests, estate planning, land exchange, and community land trust management. Land trust organizations also facilitate federal income tax benefits for donors. The land trust organization can also actively seek land and financial donations for this purpose.

Management and Maintenance

Management and maintenance of the greenway system including land acquired for future greenway use is an issue that must be considered. Much of the greenway corridor will require minimal maintenance, but some portions of land or trail will require ongoing management and maintenance, such as security, mowing, pruning and trail repair. In addition, all greenway land must be insured against liability. While Ozark Greenways should be the catalyst for greenway corridor acquisition and development in the community, they should not be the management and maintenance arm of the system. The appropriate organization to manage and maintain the greenway system is the Springfield-Greene County Park Board. As a city-county agency, the Park Board has the skills and resources to effectively manage and maintain a greenway system. In conjunction with Ozark Greenways, the Park Board can manage lands and develop trails and facilities for the greenway system.

Ozark Greenways should continue to expand its membership and volunteer base and continue its role in raising the awareness of and educating the community on the purpose and importance of greenways to our community. Ozark Greenways should also work with citizens on donating easements or land for greenway conservation purposes. Ozark Greenways should also help acquire land and serve as a land manager of greenway corridors until they are integrated into the greenway system. The Park Board, through the city's Parks Department, should provide the staff and equipment to design, manage, and maintain the greenway system. The Park Department should include a Greenway Division within its organizational structure as well as incorporating greenway maintenance as a part of its Maintenance and Operations Division. Both the City and County should provide funding sources to manage and maintain the greenway system. Under certain circumstances, other city, county, state or federal agencies should be involved in greenway planning, design, management and maintenance. For example, where state roads and greenways intersect both the city and/or county and the Missouri Department of Transportation should coordinate efforts from the design stage through the construction stage. If a greenway also includes stormwater management facilities, then the Parks Department must coordinate their efforts with other city and county agencies to achieve desirable results from both a greenways perspective and stormwater management perspectives. Establishing joint-use agreements between agencies will provide a framework of understanding for all agencies involved and avoid conflict or duplication of services.

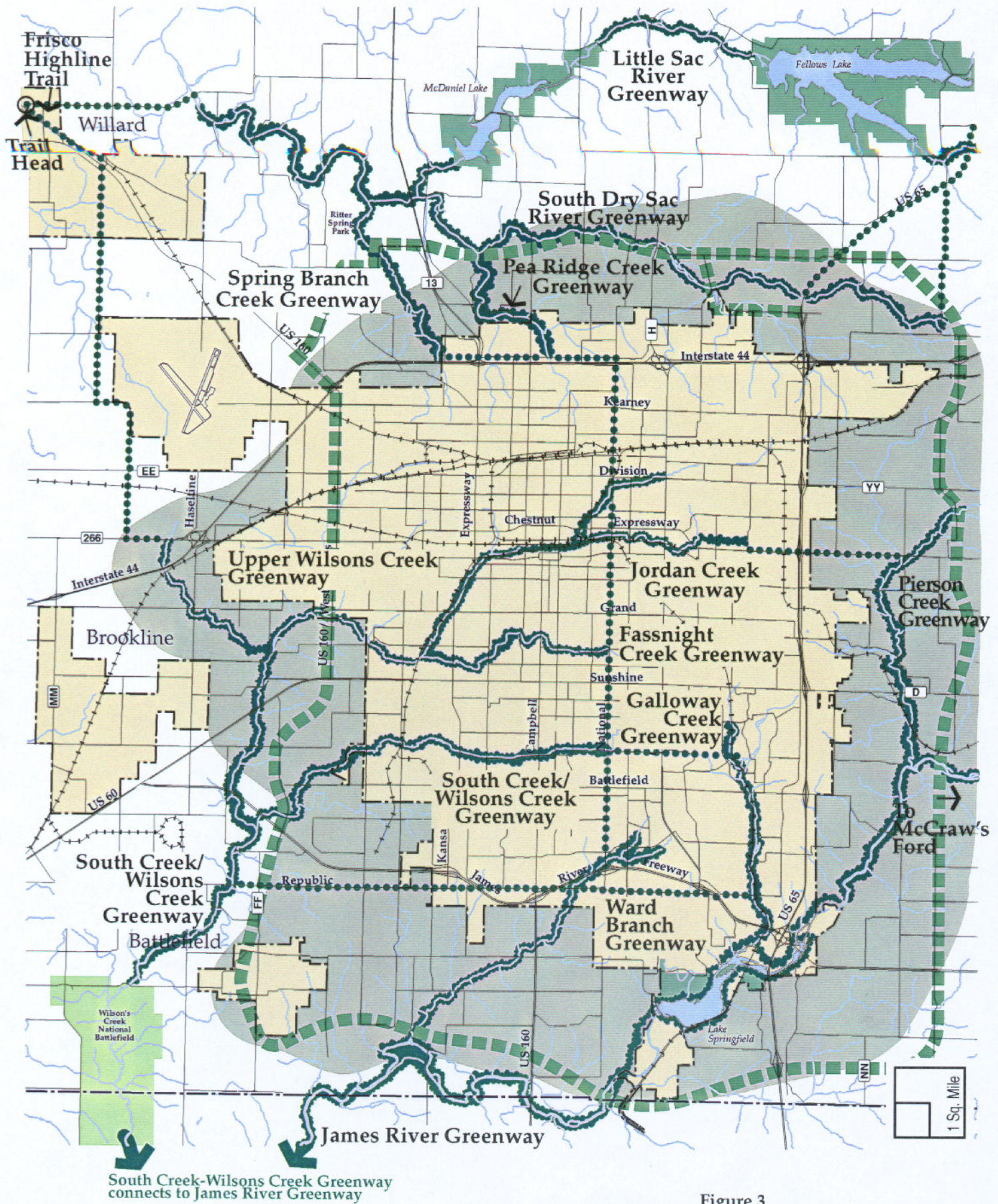


Figure 3
Greenway System Plan

Greenway System Recommendations

- C Use the greenway system to define the future urban development pattern.
- C Use the natural drainage pattern to provide the framework for a greenway system.
- C Ensure that designated greenway corridors are secured for future use prior to being developed.
- C Ensure that the conservation network is identified and preserved for future use prior to being developed.
- C Integrate stormwater management and greenway planning to provide multi-use corridors.
- C Assure that public improvements within designated greenway corridors accommodate the greenway at a future date.
- C Provide as many uses within the greenway as appropriate and practical.
- C Provide convenient connections within the greenway system and between greenway corridors, parks, open space, residential and commercial development, and other activity centers as development occurs.
- C Establish design and construction standards for the development of the greenway system.
- C Develop a theme signage program to unify the park, open space, and greenway system.
- C Develop a parkway system that accommodates multiple modes of transportation, compliments the greenway system, and links major recreations facilities.
- C Create parkway corridors that serve as parks and green space and also provide transportation facilities.
- C Incorporate the greenway system into the future parkway system to ensure a convenient and multi-modal transportation network.
- C Use recycled products and other environmentally friendly techniques when designing and developing greenway trails, facilities and fixtures.
- C Develop and promote an Adopt-A-Greenway Program to encourage community participation in the maintenance and “ownership” of the greenway system.
- C Designate the city’s Parks Department as organization responsible to provide the staff and equipment to acquire, plan, design, manage, and maintain the greenway system.
- C Establish a Greenway Division within the Park Department for the planning and design of greenway corridors and parks.
- C Incorporate greenway maintenance as a part of the park Department’s Maintenance and Operations Division.
- C Establish joint-use agreements between all participating agencies that will promote the sharing of land facilities and resources, provide a framework of understanding for all agencies involved in a project, avoid conflict, and eliminate duplication of services.
- C Establish a relationship with the railroads to keep apprised of potential or future railroad abandonments. Acquire, develop, and incorporate abandoned railroad corridors into the greenway system, when they become available.
- C Establish Ozark Greenways as a land trust to help acquire land and manage it prior to becoming part of the greenway system.

Specific Greenway Descriptions and Recommendations

The greenway system consists of several different greenway corridors. These corridors are:

Fassnight Creek
Frisco Highline Trail
Galloway Creek
James River
Jordan Creek
Little Sac River
Pea Ridge Creek

Pierson Creek
South Creek/Wilsons Creek
South Dry Sac River
Spring Branch
Upper Wilsons Creek
Ward Branch

The following section includes descriptions, a map, and recommendations for each greenway segment in the system.

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Fassnight Creek Greenway

Location and Setting

Fassnight Creek Greenway is located in central Springfield from National Avenue on the east to its confluence with Jordan Creek, in the vicinity of James Ewing Park (Bennett and Scenic). The greenway is approximately 3.1 miles in length..

Existing Public Lands

Phelps Grove, Fassnight, and Loren Street Parks are located along the Fassnight Creek Greenway, with James Ewing Park at the confluence of Fassnight and Jordan Creeks. Parkview High School is also located adjacent to the greenway.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

No significant natural features have been identified. Maple Park Cemetery is located along the north side of the creek at Campbell Avenue. The historic parks of Phelps Grove and Fassnight also provide the opportunity for cultural and historical experiences. Portions of the creek through both Phelps Grove and Fassnight Parks are lined with stone walls constructed during the WPA/CCC era. The Springfield Art Museum is also located in Phelps Grove Park.

Greenway Connections

The Fassnight Creek Greenway meets the Jordan Creek Greenway at its westernmost edge near James Ewing Park. On the eastern edge of the greenway, a connection should be established along National Ave. to connect with other greenways, including the Jordan Creek Greenway and the South Creek Greenway. Several proposed bikeway corridors (Jefferson-Kimbrough Aves., Bennett St., and Fort Av.) connect with the greenway.

Development Trends

Most of the Fassnight Creek Greenway is developed up to the creek bed with residential neighborhoods. The west end, near Kansas Expressway, has some industrial uses located along the greenway with only a slight chance of development as it leads into James Ewing Park.

Fassnight Creek Greenway Recommendations

- C Acquire properties along the creek, between Phelps Grove Park and Fassnight Park, as they become available to open up the greenway corridor and provide a stronger link between the two parks.
- C Acquire property or recreational easements along the western portion of the greenway.
- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Provide trailheads in Phelps Grove, Fassnight, and James Ewing Parks.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

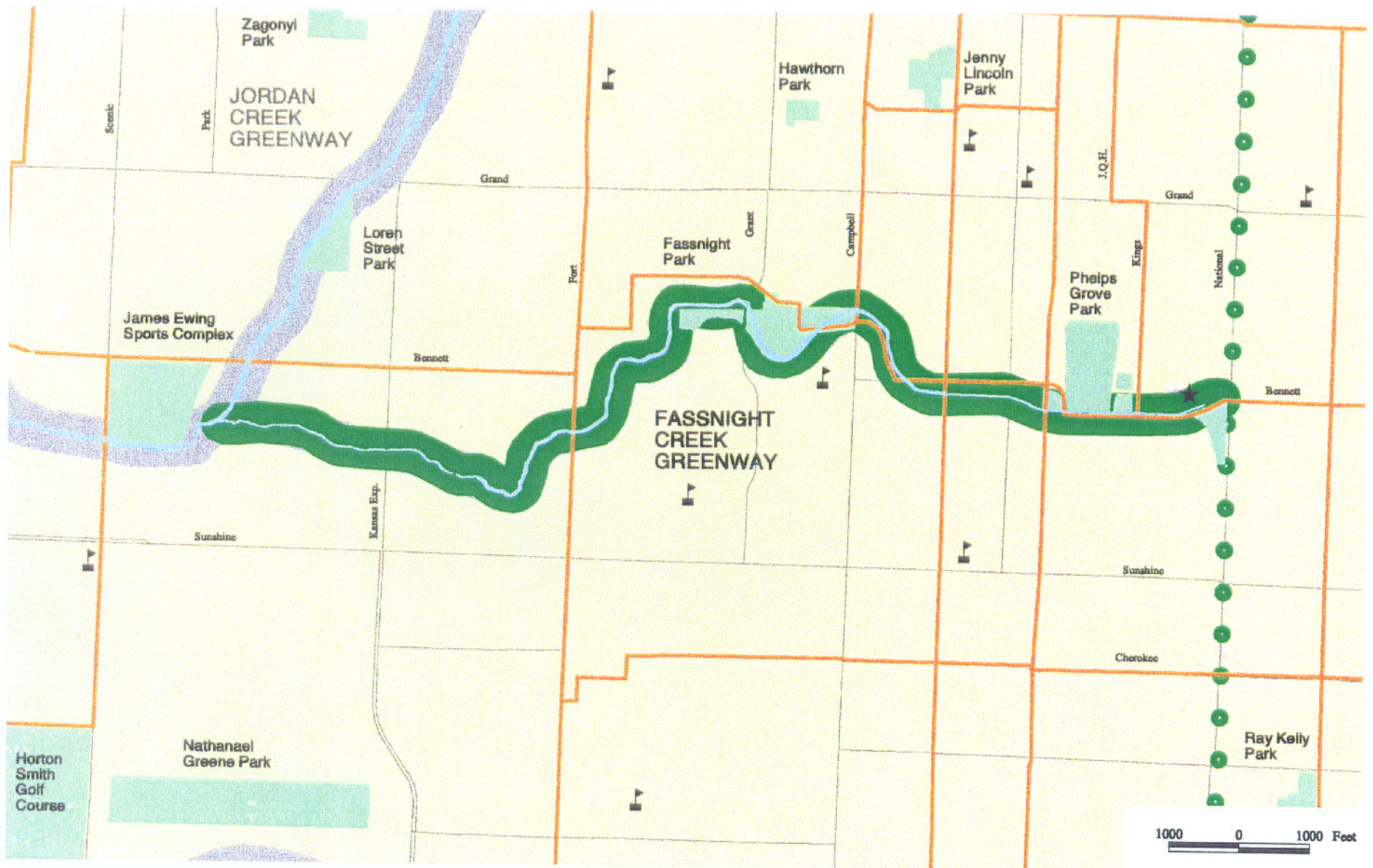
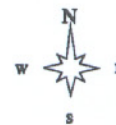


Figure 4
Fasnicht Creek Greenway



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Frisco Highline Trail

Location and Setting

The Frisco Highline Trail is a public trail which originates in downtown Willard and follows the old Frisco rail corridor to Bolivar. This trail is a 30.4 miles rail- trail that runs across the agricultural plains and rolling hills of rural southwest Missouri. The Highline Trail is a unique greenway corridor in the Springfield area because it contains not only hiking / biking pedestrian trail, but a parallel equestrian trail as well. This Rails-to-Trails project was acquired by Ozark Greenways in 1994 from Burlington Northern Railroad and memorializes the St. Louis-San Francisco Railroad. The first ten-mile segment from Willard to Walnut Grove should be completed in 1998.

Existing Public Lands

The Frisco Highline Trail incorporates several towns along the corridor including Willard, Walnut Grove, and Bolivar. In these towns, public land is used for the trail system.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

The Frisco Highline Trail is an ecologically diverse corridor which contains several significant natural features worth preserving and promoting as attractions. The trail crosses the Little Sac River and passes through the La Petite Gemme Prairie (Missouri Prairie Foundation/Missouri Department of Conservation), a 40-acre tract of natural prairie, just south of Bolivar. Other significant natural features in the vicinity of the trail corridor, include Stockton Lake (US Army Corps of Engineers), Bois D'Arc Wildlife Area, and Rocky Barrens Conservation Area (both Missouri Department of Conservation). Willard, Walnut Grove, and Bolivar contain several historic or cultural sites or structures.

Greenway Connections

On the east, the Highline Trail will connect to the Little Sac River Greenway through a corridor along O Highway. On the south, the Wilsons Creek Greenway will connect to the Highline Trail through a corridor that runs adjacent to the Springfield-Branson Regional Airport. A bikeway corridor connection to the trail from Springfield is also proposed in the vicinity of the U.S. Highway 160 corridor. The bicycle and greenway corridors between Springfield and Willard are critical links for the Highline Trail between Willard and the remainder of the proposed greenway system.

Development Trends

Development does not threaten this corridor since it is already publicly owned.

Frisco Highline Trail Recommendations

- C Complete the remaining section of the trail from Walnut Grove to Bolivar.
- C Prepare a study to determine the specific greenway and bicycle connections between Springfield and Willard.
- C Promote the history and significance of the former St. Louis-San Francisco Transcontinental Railroad, including several historic towns located along the trail including Mineral Springs and Graydon Springs. Encourage the citizens and communities along the trail to participate in this effort.
- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

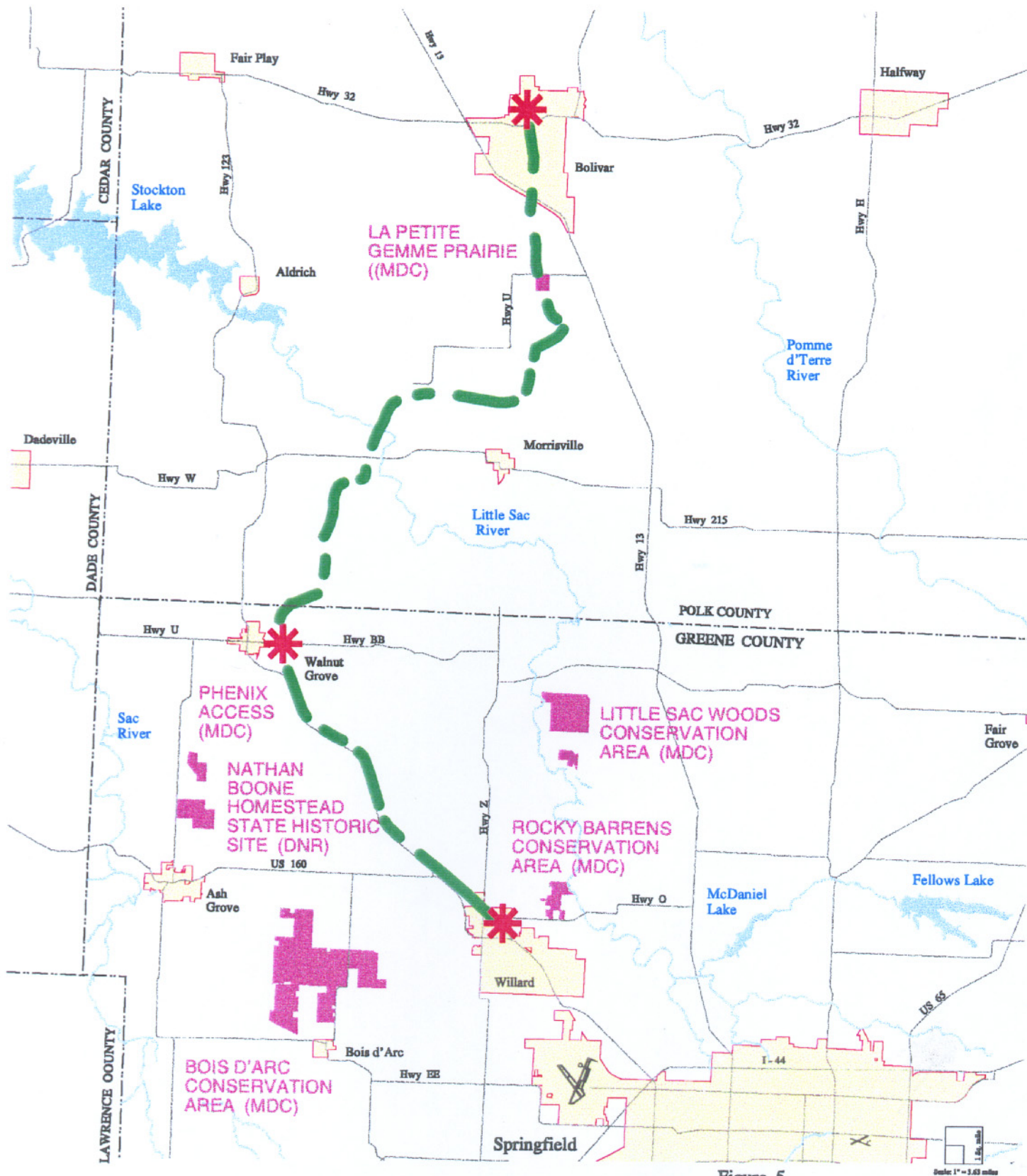
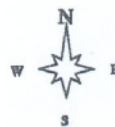


Figure 5
Frisco Highline Trail

- Frisco Highline Trail
- Trailheads
- Federal or State Properties



Springfield - Greene County

Comprehensive Plan

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Galloway Creek Greenway

Location and Setting

The proposed Galloway Creek Greenway is located in southeast Springfield. The 4.2 mile greenway corridor extends from Pershing School south to Lake Springfield and the Springfield Conservation Nature Center. The area around Galloway Creek is almost entirely developed with residential, commercial, public, and industrial use, but the greenway corridor is intact and suitable for a greenway. The Galloway Creek Greenway is a greenway project being actively pursued by Ozark Greenways and the Springfield-Greene County Park Board with additional land currently being sought. The first section of the greenway from Sequiota Park to the Springfield Conservation Nature Center and Lake Springfield will be completed in 1998.

Existing Public Lands

Pershing School is the trailhead at the northern end of the corridor. The greenway runs through Sequiota Park before reaching Lake Springfield (City Utilities) and the Springfield Conservation Nature Center (Missouri Department of Conservation). The Lone Pine Recycling Center (City of Springfield) is located along the greenway just south of battlefield.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

Sequoiota Spring and Cave, a former state park and fish hatchery, are the most significant natural and historic features along Galloway Creek. Also, the Springfield Conservation Nature Center (Missouri Department of Conservation) is located at the southern terminus of Galloway Creek providing an public nature preserve and interpretation facility.

Greenway Connections

The Galloway Creek Greenway connects to the James River Greenway at Lake Springfield. A connection should be established to link the greenway with Meador and McDaniel Parks and the South Creek Greenway. Several proposed bikeway corridors (Galloway Rd., Lacuna St., and Lone Pine Av.) connect with the greenway.

Development Trends

The entire greenway corridor is bordered by the railroad right-of-way, Lone Pine Road, residential neighborhoods, or commercial businesses. However, the section of the greenway corridor from Pershing School to Battlefield Road is adjacent to currently undeveloped property listed for sale and zoned for commercial and residential uses. There is high risk of additional development along the northern section of the greenway.

Galloway Creek Greenway Recommendations

- C Complete the remaining section of the trail from Sequiota to Pershing School.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the northern section of the corridor between Pershing School and Battlefield Road.
- C Highlight the historic attributes of Sequiota Park and incorporate into the greenway experience.
- C Acquire the property south of Pershing School and develop as a trailhead for the greenway.
- C Incorporate and acquire the existing parallel railroad corridor into the greenway plan, if Burlington Northern decides to abandon the rail corridor.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

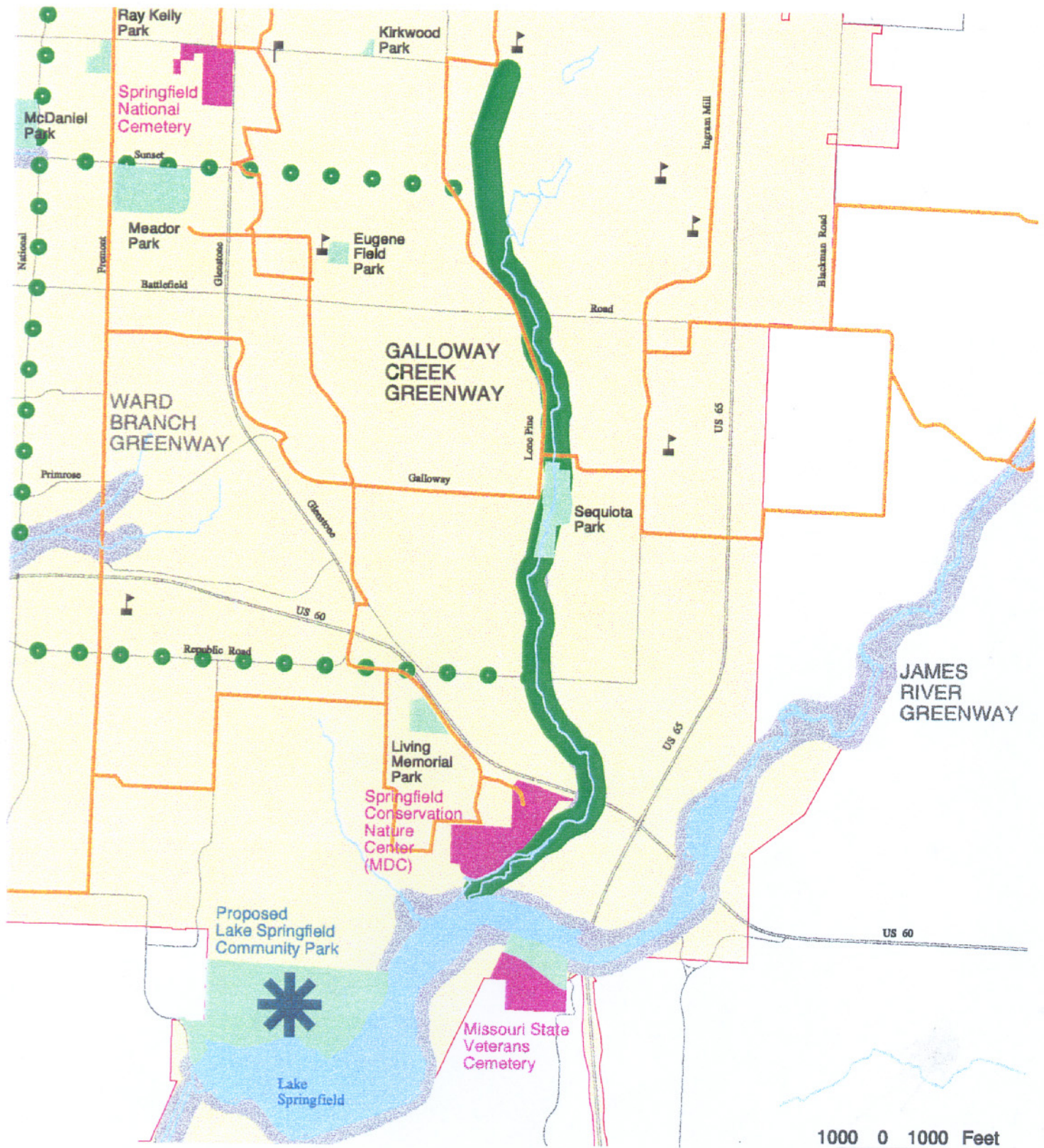
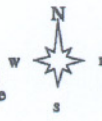


Figure 6
Galloway Greenway

- Proposed Bike Routes
- Parks
- City Limits
- State or Federal Properties
- Galloway Creek Greenway
- Adjacent Greenways
- Greenway Connections

- Public Schools
- Public Libraries
- Proposed Community and Natural Resource Area Parks



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James River Greenway

Location and Setting

The James River is the major drainage feature in Greene County and the Springfield area. It flows along the lower east and south sides of Springfield. It is set among rolling hills, and is partially forest covered, in agricultural use, with some residential development along its corridor. The James River Greenway begins at McCraws Ford Natural Resource Area and extends approximately 25.1 miles to its junction with Wilsons Creek just south of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield in Christian County.

Existing Public Lands

City Utilities which owns approximately four (4) miles of frontage along the James River created Lake Springfield as a cooling water supply for the James River Power Plant. Together, these lands comprise approximately 1440 acres. The Springfield Conservation Nature Center (Missouri Department of Conservation) is also located along the James River, adjacent to Lake Springfield. In addition, Rivercut Golf Course, a recently completed public golf course, is located along the corridor. Wilson's Creek National Battlefield (National Park Service) is located a mere ½ mile upstream, along Wilsons Creek from the west end of the James River Greenway.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

The James River is a significant resource since it flows year-round and supports canoeing, fishing, swimming and drinking water. As the primary drainage feature in Greene County and due to its meandering nature over the years, the James River has carved out some rather large bluffs and created several oxbow lakes along its path. A habitat area for the Missouri Bladderpod, an endangered plant species is located along the river as well. McCraws Ford, the eastern terminus of the proposed greenway, provided the river crossing for the main east-west road since the earliest settlers. Other significant features along the James River Greenway Corridor include: the Little Yosemite Spring, Creighton Natural Bridge, Winoka Spring, Camp Cora Spring, Breakdown Cave (Christian County), Shelf Cave, Saunders Valley (Christian County), Blue Spring, and Indian Spring.

Greenway Connections

The James River Greenway connects with the Pierson Creek Greenway, the Galloway Creek Greenway, the Ward Branch Greenway, and the Wilsons Creek Greenway. The greenway will also parallel and connect to the proposed River Bluff Parkway, which connects U.S. Highway 65 with the future West Bypass extension. Proposed bikeway corridors connect with the greenway along Highway D, Smith Rd. (FR 164), and the proposed Cox Road extension to FR 141.

Development Trends

Segments of the James River corridor have been developed, and with development trends southward, this will continue, rating the James River as a high risk for development.

James River Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor.
- C Coordinate with Christian County to preserve, acquire, and develop the greenway segment in their jurisdiction.
- C Develop a loop trail at Lake Springfield which connects to the greenway.
- C Incorporate the greenway into Rivercut Golf Course.
- C Develop trailheads at McCraws Ford, Lake Springfield, the Cox Road extension to FR 141, and Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Park.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to "adopt" sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

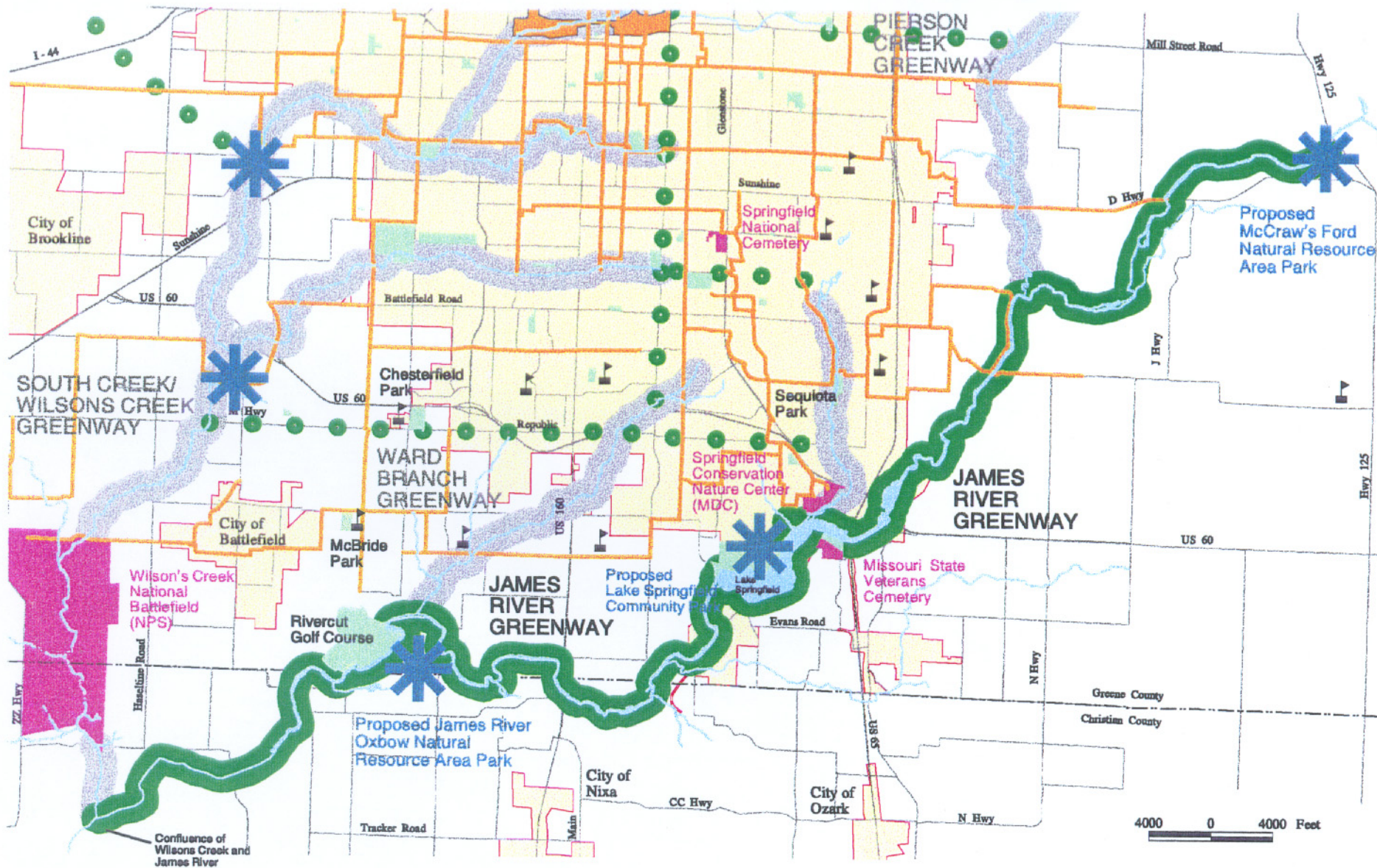


Figure 7
James River Greenway

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Jordan Creek Greenway

Location and Setting

The Jordan Creek Greenway actually begins as two corridors. The north branch of the Jordan Creek Greenway begins in Smith Park and flows southwest for approximately 1.7 miles before converging with the 'lower' branch of the Jordan Creek Greenway. The south branch of the Jordan Creek Greenway begins at Glenwood Park and flows west for approximately 2.7 miles. The confluence of the two branches at Gage Av. and Phelps St. is just north of downtown in the Jordan Creek Valley. After converging into one stream, Jordan Creek flows approximately 3.1 miles as it travels underground through downtown and meanders southwest to the confluence with Fassnight Creek. The confluence of Jordan and Fassnight Creeks forms Wilsons Creek. The greenway corridor is developed with residential, commercial, public, and industrial uses. Except for a few sections in residential neighborhoods and in the Jordan Creek Valley industrial corridor the greenway corridor is intact and suitable for greenway development. In fact, west of Kansas Expressway, the corridor is more open and undeveloped with only some industrial and residential uses in proximity.

Existing Public Lands

Smith and Silver Springs Parks are located along the 'upper' branch of Jordan Creek Greenway. Evangel College, a private college, is located adjacent to Smith Park at the beginning of the greenway. Glenwood, James Ewing, and Loren Street Parks and Cooper/Killian Sports Complex are located along the 'lower' Jordan Creek Greenway. Zagonyi Park is also located two blocks from the greenway. In the Jordan Creek Valley downtown, the greenway travels past Founder's Park and through the proposed 'Civic Park.' Much of the remaining land is privately held, much of it in relatively small, high value, tracts.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

The settlement that eventually became Springfield was located along Jordan Creek. This settlement will be memorialized with the completion Founders Park located at Water Street and Jefferson Avenue. The downtown area is bursting with historical and cultural resources, ripe for development, redevelopment, and interpretation. As Civic Park unfolds, it will become a significant cultural attraction in downtown. While there are no identified significant natural features, there are a few Spring locations and a former quarry located along the Jordan Creek.

Greenway Connections

The Jordan Creek Greenway will connect with the Fassnight Creek and Wilsons Creek Greenways. There are several proposed bikeway corridors that will connect with the greenway, including the Jefferson-Kimbrough corridor, Bennett St., Walnut St., Division St., Fort Av., Sherman Av. and Fremont Av.

Development Trends

The first three miles of the Jordan Creek Greenway are intensively developed, with many areas in need of redevelopment. West of downtown, however, the corridor is moderately developed and in some places undeveloped. There is low risk of additional development along the Jordan Creek in the near future, although securing the undeveloped portions of the stream should be a priority.

Jordan Creek Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor.
- C Coordinate and incorporate the development of the greenway into the design of 'Civic Park.'
- C Link the greenway with the development of Founders Park.
- C Develop trailheads at Smith, Glenwood, and James Ewing Parks.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods, non-residential businesses, and the college along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to "adopt" sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

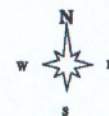
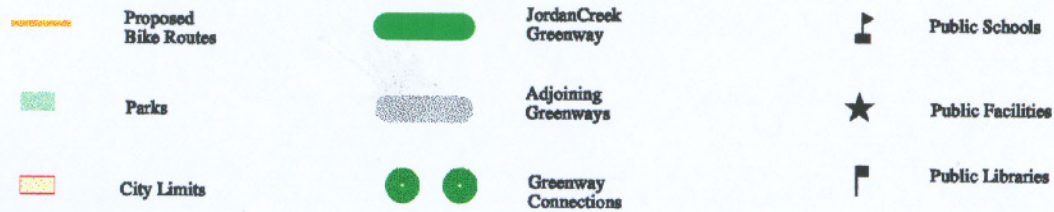
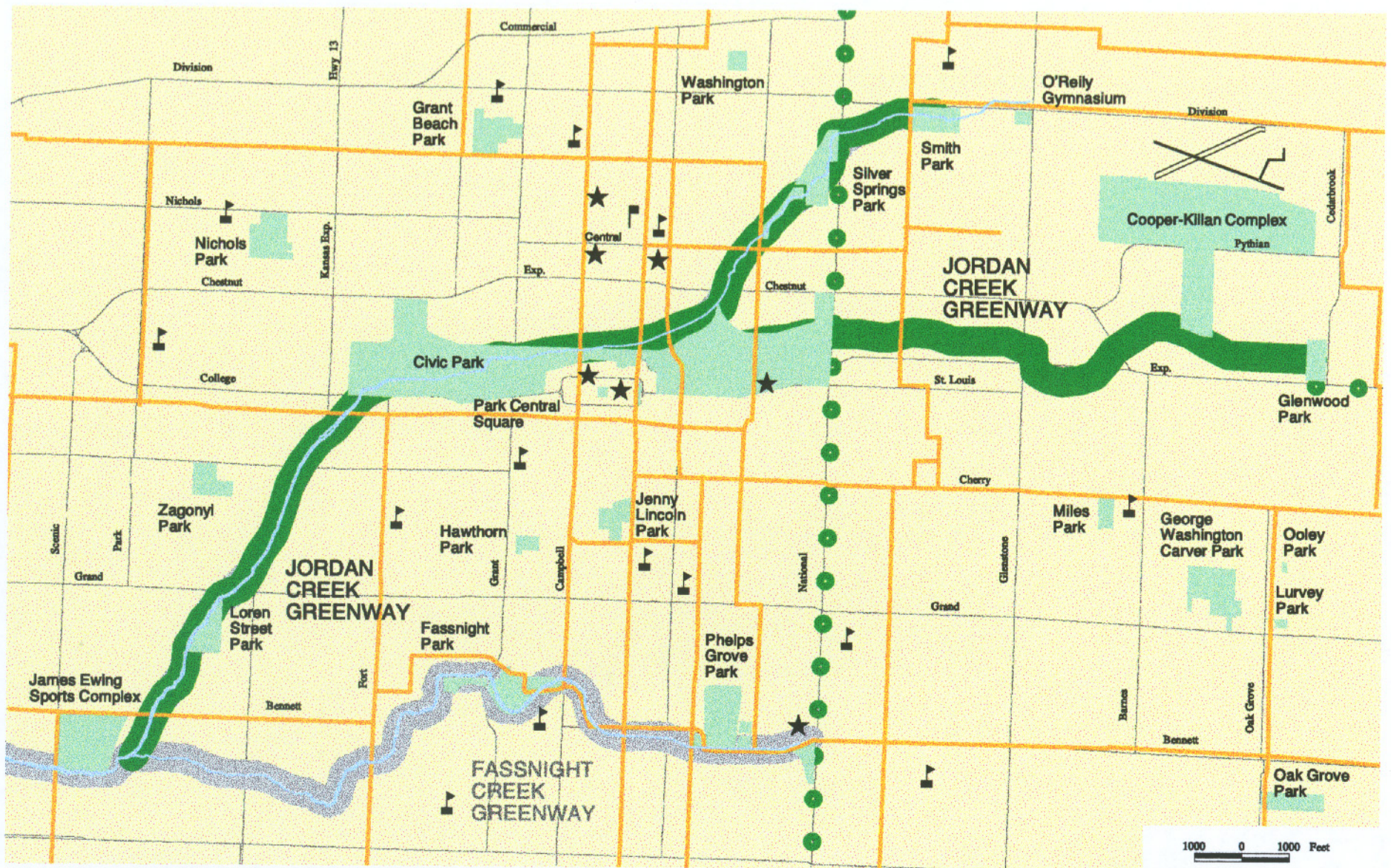


Figure 8
Jordan Creek Greenway

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Little Sac River Greenway

Location and Setting

The Little Sac River Greenway is located north of Springfield among rolling hills and forests, along the Little Sac River. The greenway extends from U.S. Highway 65 (east of Fellows Lake) approximately 15.8 miles to O Highway. The Little Sac River Greenway corridor is the northernmost greenway in the system and is generally surrounded by agricultural or residential acreage properties in a rural setting.

Existing Public Lands

Fellows and McDaniel Lakes (both City Utilities facilities) comprise 3,275 acres of public land along the proposed greenway. In addition, the greenway flows through Ritter Springs Park. Also, located near the greenway corridor is Fulbright Water Treatment Plant (City Utilities) and Rocky Barrens Conservation Area (Missouri Department of Conservation).

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

Crystal Cave (privately owned) is located between Fellows and McDaniel Lakes. Williams Spring and Fantastic Caverns (private) are located one mile west of Ritter Springs Park. Both Fellows and McDaniel lakes are sources for Springfield's water supply.

Greenway Connections

The Little Sac River Greenway will terminate on the west at O Highway, which will connect to the Frisco Highline Trail in downtown Willard. The greenway will connect to the South Dry Sac River Greenway on the west near Highway 13, just east of Ritter Springs Park and on the east, along the U.S. Highway 65 corridor. Another greenway connection will link the east end of Fellows Lake southward to the Pierson Creek Greenway along a proposed parkway. A recreational bikeway corridor proposed along FR 189 and FR 177 will connect with the greenway.

Development Risk

There has been little development along this corridor and no major change is projected. The risk of development along the corridor is relatively low.

Little Sac River Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor.
- C Develop a loop trail at both Fellows and McDaniel Lakes which also connect to the greenway.
- C Develop trailheads at Fellows and McDaniel Lakes, Ritter Springs Park and in Willard at the Frisco Highline Trailhead.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

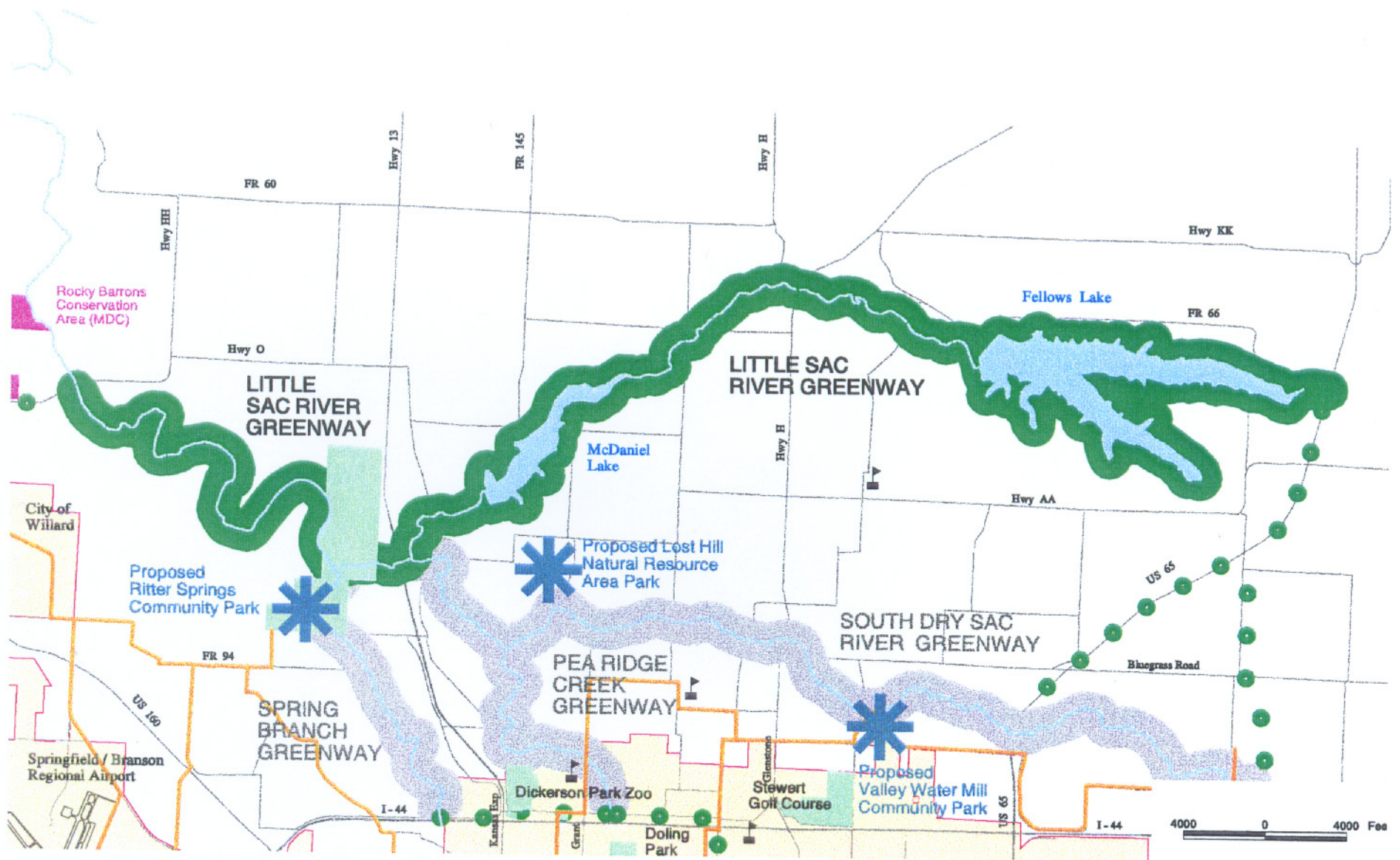
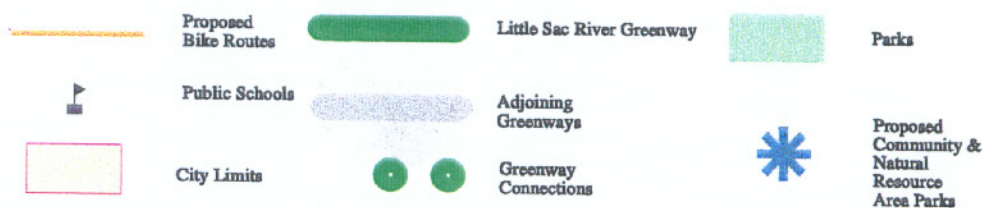


Figure 9
Little Sac River Greenway



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Pea Ridge Creek Greenway

Location and Setting

Pea Ridge Creek Greenway is located in the northern area of the city. It flows a distance of approximately 2.8 miles, from Doling Park to its confluence with the South Dry Sac River. It is a winding creek that is set among a forested corridor containing residential neighborhoods, agricultural areas, and a few industrial businesses.

Existing Public Lands

Pea Ridge Creek Greenway passes near several public areas even though it is a short greenway corridor. It starts at the Doling Park and Community Center and precedes north under I-44 to Central Bible College. The greenway flows near the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds, and north of Hillcrest High School and Dickerson Park Zoo before reaching Fulbright Water Treatment Plant (City Utilities) as it joins the South Dry Sac River.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

Besides the quaint creek that meanders through the gentle hillside, the greenway also connects natural caves and springs. CBC Cave is located along the greenway and Doling Park has a natural spring that begins in Doling Park Cave and trickles out to form a lake with in the park. One branch of Pea Ridge Creek flows from the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds and another is incorporated at the Dickerson Park Zoo. The greenway also flows past Fulbright Spring, a source for Springfield's drinking water since 1883.

Greenway Connections

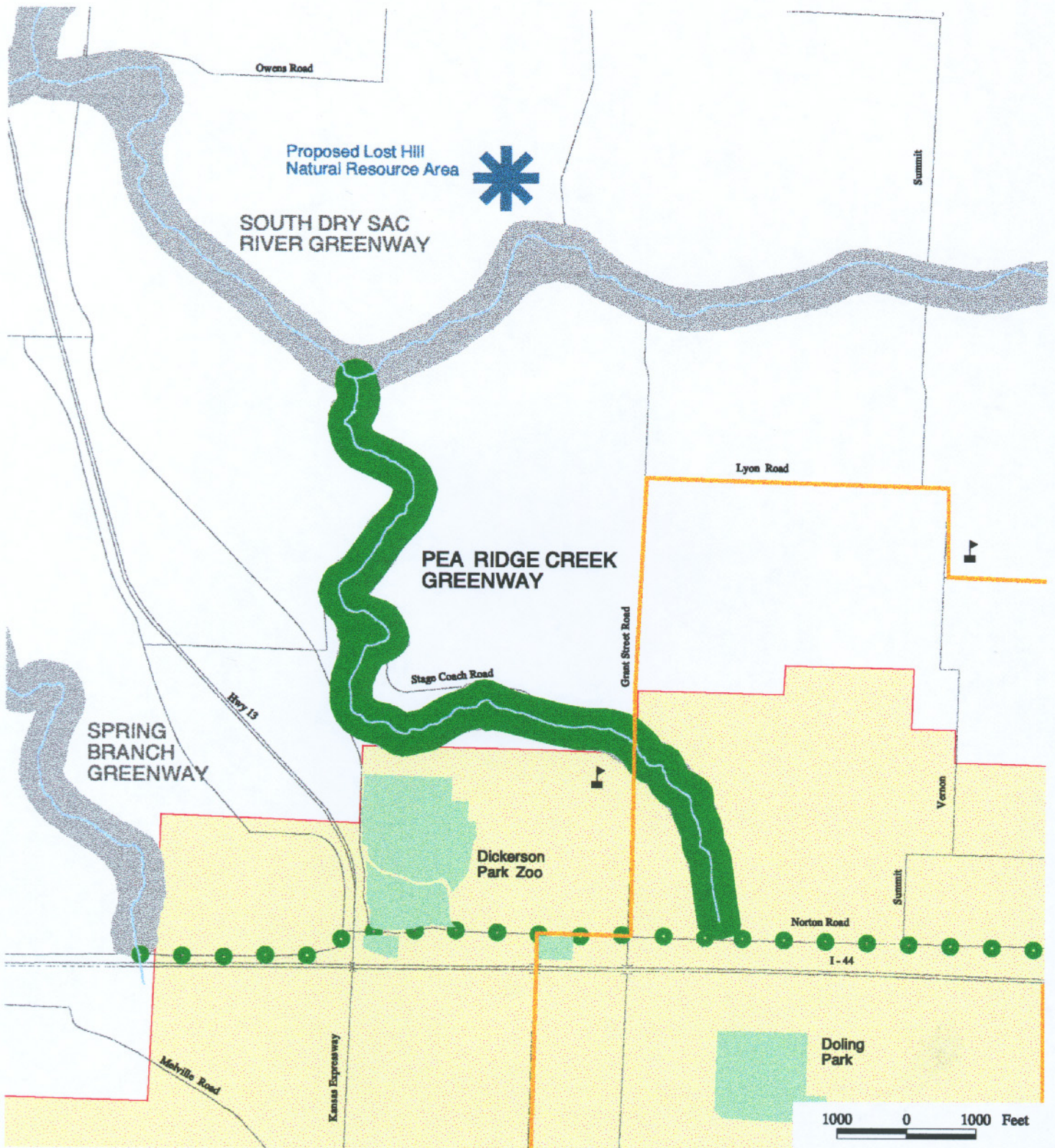
The Pea Ridge Creek Greenway connects with the South Dry Sac and Little Sac Greenways. It also connects with Spring Branch Greenway along the Norton Road corridor. The proposed Grant Avenue bikeway corridor connects with the greenway.

Development Risk

There has been little development that affects the greenway corridor and no major change is projected in the near future. At this time, the risk of development along the corridor is relatively low.

Pea Ridge Creek Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor.
- C Develop a trailhead at Doling Park and examine the potential for a trailhead at Fulbright Water Treatment Plant.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods, non-residential businesses, the college, fairgrounds and the zoo along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.



- | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|--|
| | Proposed Bike Routes | | Pea Ridge Branch Greenway |
| | Public Schools | | Adjoining Greenways |
| | City Limits | | Parks |
| | Greenway Connections | | Proposed Community & Natural Resource Area Parks |



Figure 10
Pea Ridge Creek Greenway

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Pierson Creek Greenway

Location and Setting

The Pierson Creek Greenway is located along Pierson Creek, east of Springfield. It will begin near the intersection of the creek and YY Highway (extension of Division Street) near a proposed Community Park. The greenway travels approximately 6.1 miles until its confluence with the James River. It flows among rolling hills, forests, pasture, and some residential development.

Existing Public Lands

Currently there are no public lands along this greenway segment. However, Pierson Creek Community Park is proposed at the intersection of FR 199 and Pierson Creek. This park would also coincide with the development of a future north-south parkway corridor on the east side of Springfield.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

Pierson Creek is part of the city's drinking water supply. It flows through a former lead and zinc mining region and contains Jones Spring and Snow Spring. In addition, Mill Street (Steury) and Creighton Natural Bridges are located within ½ mile of the greenway corridor.

Greenway Connections

The north end of the Pierson Creek Greenway will connect with the proposed east side parkway and a community park. The south end will connect with the James River Greenway. The parkway is proposed to include a wide right-of-way with plenty of green space, a median, planting strips, and pedestrian/bikeway facilities. It will run from I-44 to Highway 60. Bikeway corridors are proposed along FR 136 (Cherry St.) and D Highway will connect with the greenway.

Development Trends

There is considerable residential development along lower Pierson Creek. This trend is projected to continue and the risk of loss of land to development is considered high.

Pierson Creek Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor.
- C Link and incorporate the greenway corridor into the proposed Pierson Creek Metropolitan Community Park.
- C Develop a trailhead at the proposed Pierson Creek Metropolitan Community Park and at the confluence with the James River Greenway.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

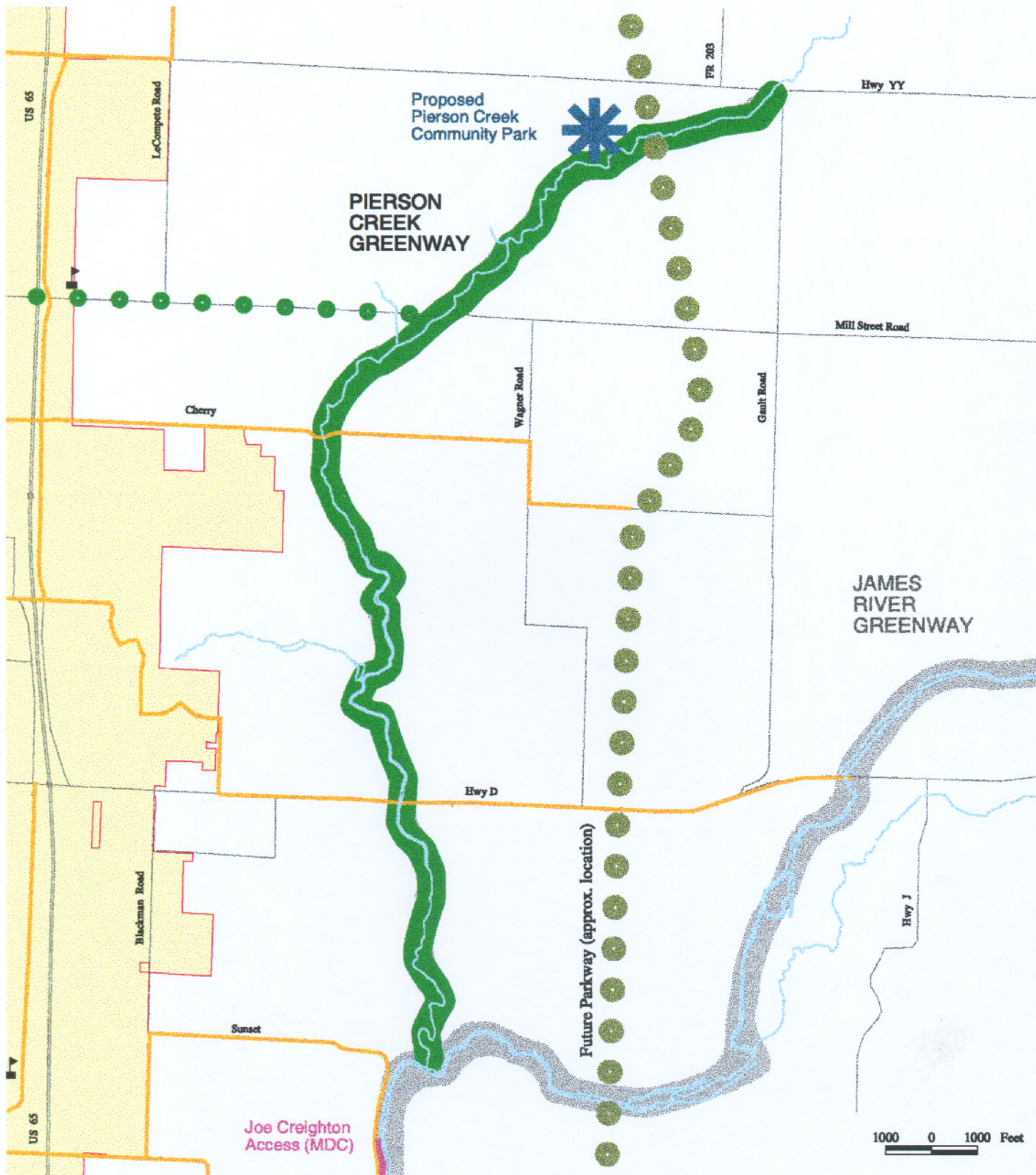
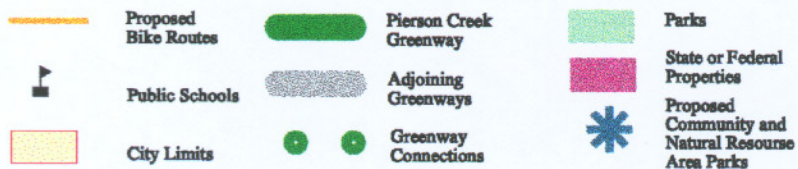


Figure 11
Pierson Creek Greenway



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South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway

Location and Setting

The South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway is an 8.7 mile greenway corridor that is composed of two stream segments: South Creek and the lower portion of Wilsons Creek. The greenway corridor stretches from Meador Park to Wilsons Creek National Battlefield. South Creek is urban in nature with much of it channelized as it parallels Sunset Avenue from Meador Park to Kansas Expressway. The trail crosses Kansas Expressway using a pedestrian/bicycle overpass and then follows the creek west in its natural corridor through industrial, commercial, and residential areas. West of Golden Avenue, the creek takes on a rural flavor with housing developments among the rolling hills and trees. South Creek and Wilsons Creek converge at the Southwest Sewage Treatment Plant. The South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway was the first greenway project in Greene County. It was planned in 1991 and is currently under trail development.

Existing Public Lands

The South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway begins in Meador Park and travels west through McDaniel Park, the undeveloped portion of Horton Smith Golf Course, and behind Carver Middle School. Champion Park and Nathanael Greene Park are located within a ¼-mile of the greenway. A 51-acre tract of land south of Nathanael Greene Park is being considered for acquisition. This property includes both sides of the creek and contains a 6-acre pond. The Southwest Sewage Treatment Plant land (City of Springfield), and the Southwest Power Plant (City Utilities) are along the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway where the two streams converge. A two mile loop trail, the Volunteer Nature Trail, also exists on the Sewage Treatment Plant property. Wilson's Creek National Battlefield is located at the southwest end of the greenway.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

Skeleton Cave, Rader Estevelle, and Rader Spring are significant natural features along the corridor. Nathanael Greene Park contains the Japanese Stroll Garden and the Gray/Campbell Farmstead. Wilson's Creek National Battlefield is one of the nation's most pristine civil war battlefields, providing historical and cultural opportunities.

Greenway Connections

The South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway would link with several other greenway corridors along the National Avenue corridor. Several bikeway corridors intersect with the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway, including Fremont, Holland, Jefferson, Fort, and Golden Avenues, and Battlefield Road.

Development Trends

The eastern portion of the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway is already developed or is under threat of development. However, as an ongoing project, land is actively being acquired for the greenway. On the southern portion of the greenway, development is sparse with most large lot residential. However, trends southwest of Springfield, toward Battlefield and Republic, and along James River Freeway make the southern portion of the corridor at high risk for development.

South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Continue to acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor. Coordinate with Ozark Greenways to complete their ISTEAs along the Wilsons Creek corridor.
- C Acquire land immediately south of Nathanael Greene Park to accommodate the trail and trailhead facilities.
- C Coordinate access to the National Battlefield with the National Park Service, to maintain the integrity and historical significance of the National Battlefield while providing a seamless connection with the greenway.
- C Develop trailheads at McDaniel and Nathanael Greene Parks and upgrade the existing trailhead at the Volunteer Nature Trail.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

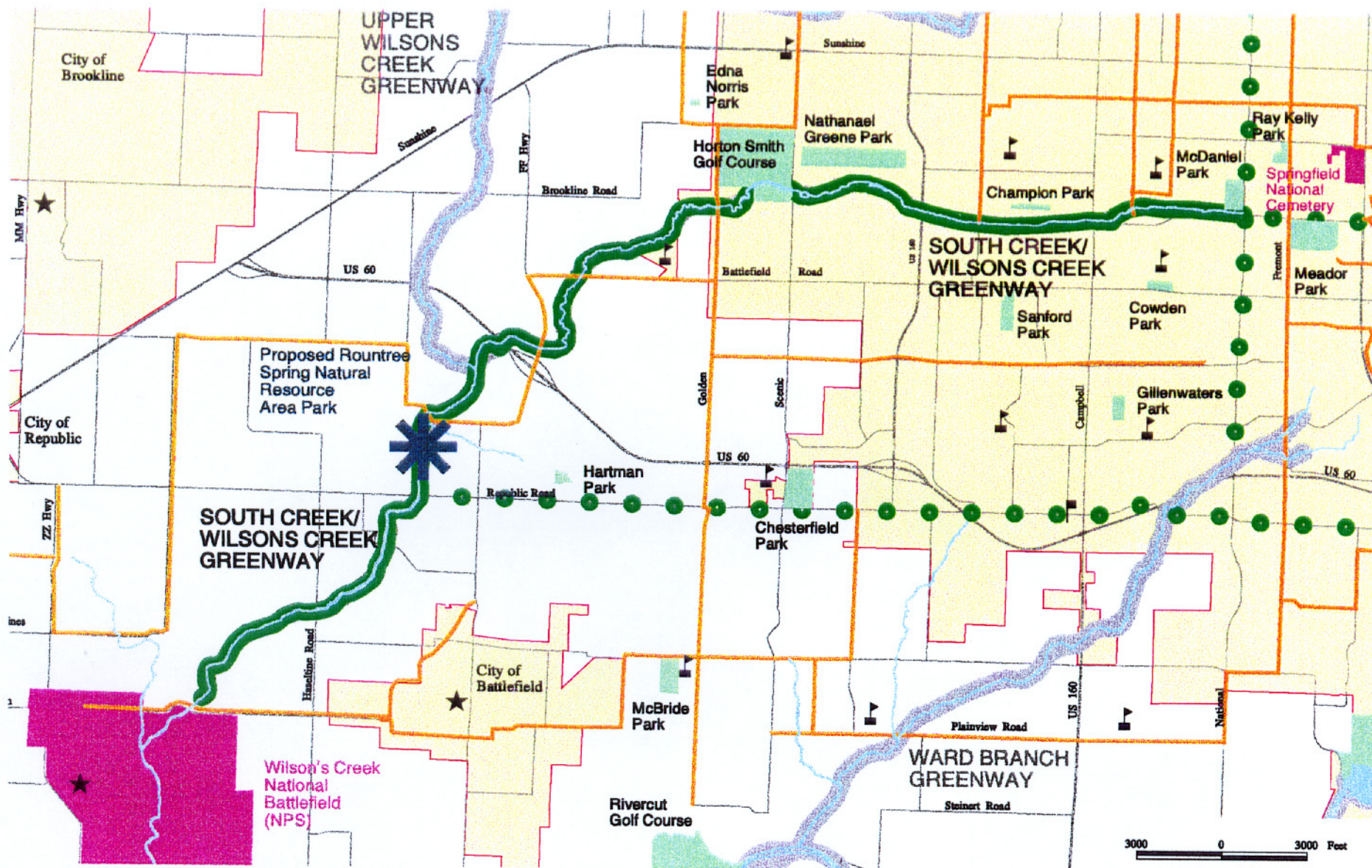
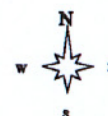


Figure 12
South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway



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South Dry Sac River Greenway

Location and Setting

The South Dry Sac River Greenway is set among rolling hills, forests, and pasture along the South Dry Sac River. The greenway extends approximately 10.5 miles from the proposed east side parkway (near Anderson Road) to the Little Sac River.

Existing Public Lands

Fulbright Water Treatment Plant and Valley Water Mill (both City Utilities) encompass 189 acres along the greenway. Valley Water Mill is a water source storage facility for drinking water and is proposed as a community park.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

The McCracken Mill site and Sander Spring are located along the South Dry Sac River Greenway. There are at least three Swallow Holes located ¼-mile downstream from Valley Water Mill. The Swallow Holes are a direct link to Fulbright Spring, a public drinking water source for Springfield since 1883. In addition, the Lost Hill area (private) is a very unique geologic feature that should be preserved for public enjoyment. It is a site where the river changed course many years ago, leaving a “hill” stranded by the old river valley and the new stream bed. The Lost Hill area contains natural arches, caves, and springs in a rural setting.

Greenway Connections

The South Dry Sac River Greenway connects with both the Little Sac River and Pea Ridge Creek Greenways near the Fulbright Water Treatment Plant. The greenway connects with the Pierson Creek Greenway along the proposed east side parkway. The South Dry Sac River Greenway also connects with the Little Sac River Greenway along the U.S. 65 corridor. Several bikeway corridors intersect the South Dry Sac River Greenway. These bikeway corridors include Valley Water Mill Rd., FR 171, and FR 189.

Development Trends

A sanitary sewer trunk line was installed along the South Dry Sac River in 1995. Through Vision 20/20, this area has also been identified as an area to encourage development. The initiatives are an attempt at promoting a balanced approach to growth for our community. With the potential for future growth in the near future and the designation of the greenway, this corridor is rated as moderate in terms of risk from development.

South Dry Sac River Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor.
- C Protect the Swallow Holes near Valley Water Mill by acquiring additional property in this section of stream.
- C Provide additional environmental protection measures for Fulbright Spring within its watershed.
- C Link and incorporate the greenway corridor into the proposed Valley Water Mill Metropolitan Community Park.
- C Develop a trailhead at Valley Water Mill.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

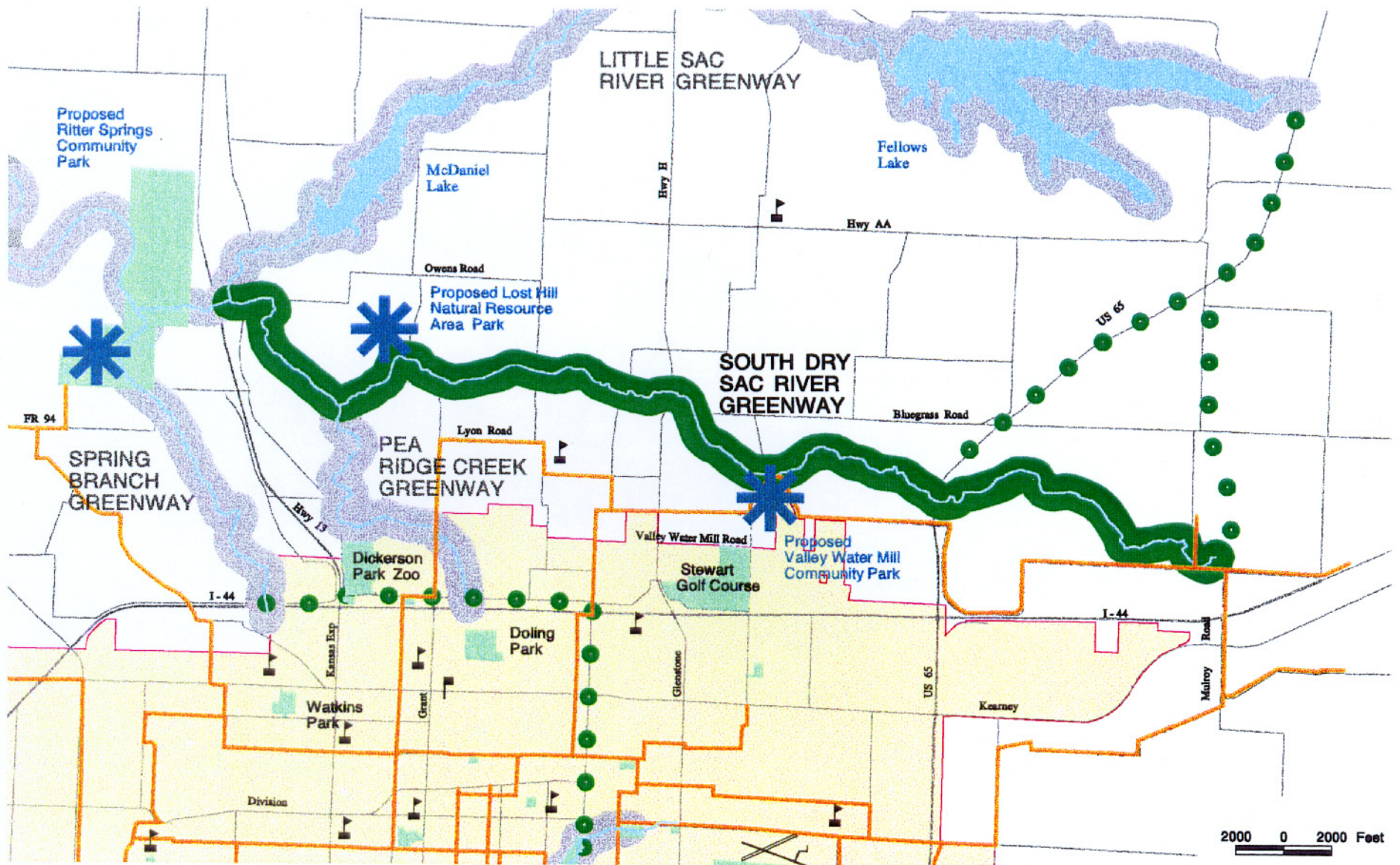


Figure 13

South Dry Sac River Greenway



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Spring Branch Greenway

Location and Setting

Spring Branch is a small branch of the Little Sac River. The greenway extends approximately 3.4 miles from Ritter Springs Park to Norton Road. Spring Branch Greenway is set among the rolling hills near agricultural fields and rural residential properties.

Existing Public Lands

Ritter Springs Park and the Sac River Trail are located where Spring Branch joins the Little Sac River. Ritter Springs Park provides several walking trails, parks, playgrounds, and picnic areas in a natural setting. The Sac River Trail, a mountain bike trail, was built on the northern portion of Ritter Springs.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

Ritter Park Spring is located just upstream of the confluence of Spring Branch and the Little Sac River in Ritter Springs Park. The Wood Property contains several springs along the greenway, upstream from Ritter Springs Park. Fantastic Caverns (private) is located less than a mile from Spring Branch Greenway.

Greenway Connections

Spring Branch Greenway connects with the Little Sac River Greenway in Ritter Springs Park. It also connects with Pea Ridge Creek and other greenways along Norton Road. Spring Branch Greenway intersects the several bicycle corridors, including Broadway Av., Grant Av., and Melville Rd. (FR 127).

Development Trends

Spring Branch flows through agricultural areas and rural residential properties. As future growth occurs in the northern part of the Springfield area, this corridor could become impacted by development. Therefore, this greenway corridor has a moderate level of risk from development.

Spring Branch Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements along the greenway corridor.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

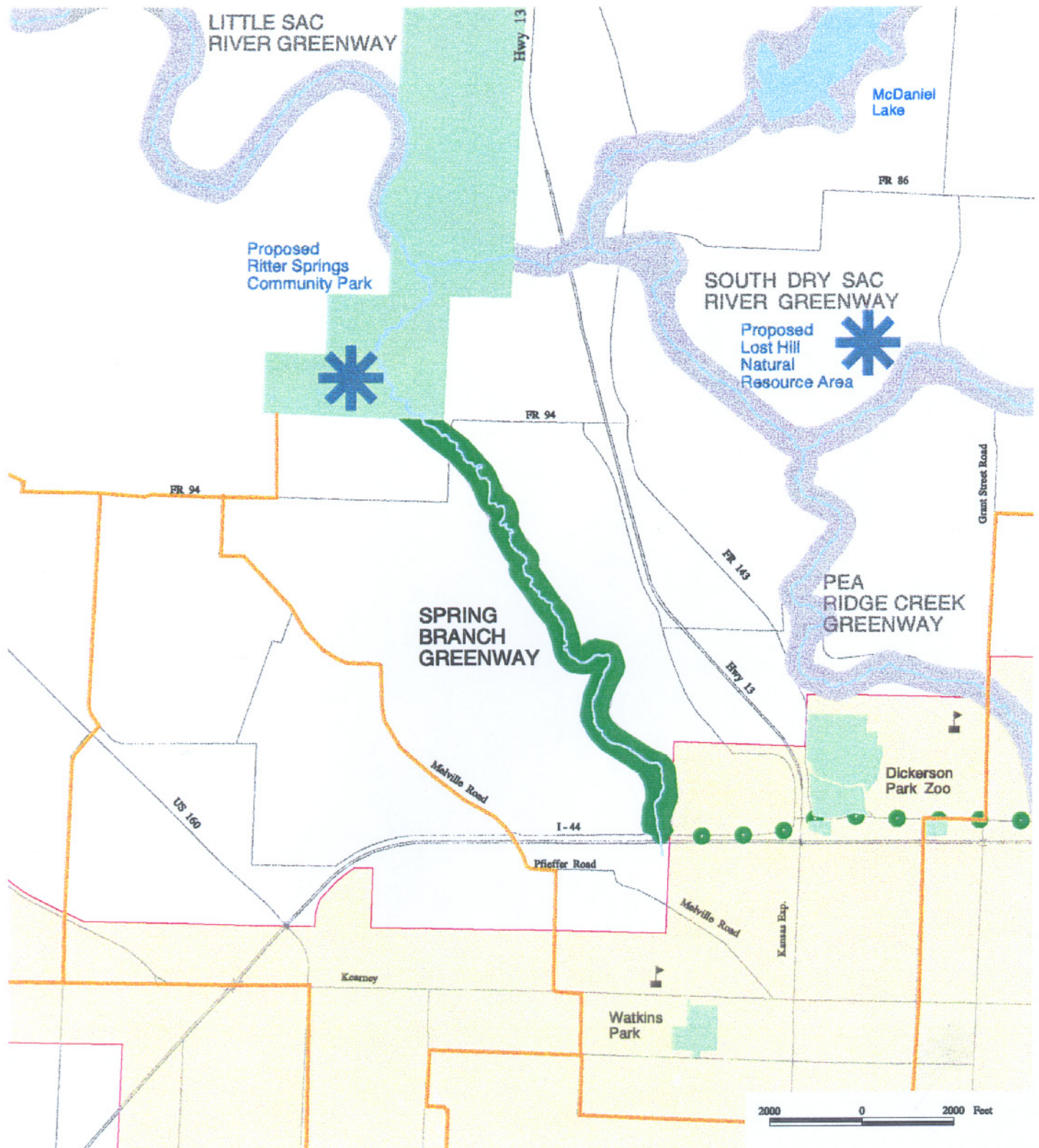
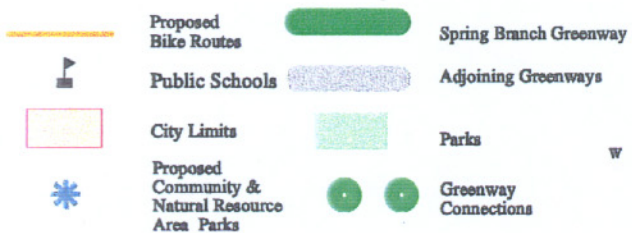


Figure 14
Spring Branch Greenway



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Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway

Location and Setting

Upper Wilsons Creek is set among rolling hills, some forest, and pasture as it flows along the west side of Springfield. Upper Wilsons Creek originates at the confluence of the Jordan and Fassnight Creeks and flows approximately 6.1 miles to its confluence with the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway.

Existing Public Lands

The Southwest Sewage Treatment Plant land (City of Springfield) is along the Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway. A two mile loop trail, the Volunteer Nature Trail, exists on the Southwest Sewage Treatment Plant property.

Significant Natural and Cultural Resources

Pfaff Cave and Carter Cave are significant natural features along Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway.

Greenway Connections

The Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway connects with South Creek Greenway (under development). It joins the James River Greenway south of the National Battlefield. Wilsons Creek Greenway will also be connected with the Jordan Creek and Fassnight Creek Greenways, an important link to central Springfield. In addition, a greenway connection is planned northward near Deer Lake Golf Course and along the western boundary of the Springfield-Branson Regional Airport to link the Frisco Highline Trail in Willard.

Development Trends

Development along Upper Wilsons Creek is sparse. However, trends southwest of Springfield, toward Battlefield and Republic, along with the recently completed James River Freeway (to Highway 60) make this corridor high at risk in the southern portion. The northern portion is only moderately at-risk.

Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements to preserve the greenway corridor from development.
- C Develop a trailhead at James Ewing Park and upgrade the existing trailhead at the Volunteer Nature Trail.
- C Link and incorporate the greenway corridor into the proposed Wilsons Creek Metropolitan Community Park (Wilsons Creek @ Bennett St.)
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

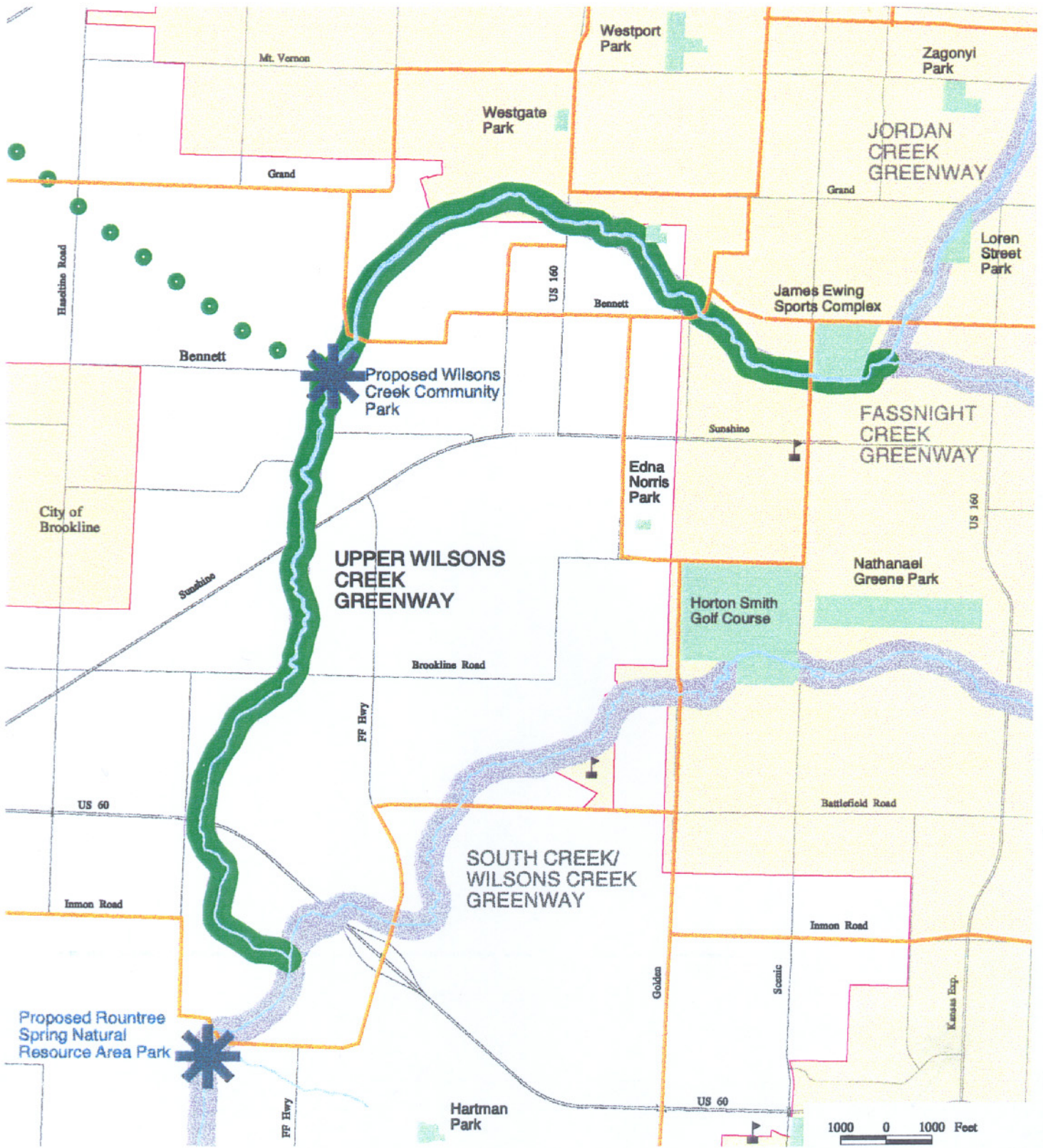


Figure 15
Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway

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Ward Branch Greenway

Location and Setting

Ward Branch is located in south Springfield. It begins in an urban environment near Primrose St. and Fremont Ave. and flows approximately 5.3 miles southwest through a rapidly developing area until it reaches the confluence with the James River. A segment of Ward Branch was recently platted as a gated community, threatening the integrity of the entire greenway by preventing public access.

Existing Public Lands

Wanda Gray Elementary School is 1/4-mile and Cherokee Elementary School is 3/4-mile from Ward Branch. Rivercut Golf Course is located near the confluence of Ward Branch and the James River.

Significant Natural and Cultural Features

There are no identified significant natural features along Ward Branch. Twin Oaks Country Club is located along the greenway.

Greenway Connections

The Ward Branch Greenway connects with the James River Greenway. It also connected to the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway among other segments along a National Avenue connector. There are several bikeway corridors that intersect with Ward Branch Greenway, including Fremont Av., James River Freeway, Plainview Rd., and a future Cox Road extension.

Development Trends

The area surrounding the Ward Branch is being rapidly developed and the proposed greenway is under a high degree of threat.

Ward Branch Greenway Recommendations

- C Prepare a greenway development plan for the design, construction, implementation, and maintenance of the trail and related facilities.
- C Acquire property or secure recreational easements to preserve the greenway corridor from development. Work with existing and future residential and non- residential developments along the corridor secure greenway access and encourage greenway connections.
- C Develop a trailhead near Fremont Avenue.
- C Promote access and provide strong physical and visual linkages to residential neighborhoods and non-residential businesses along the greenway.
- C Work with adjacent property and business owners to “adopt” sections of the trail for general maintenance and upkeep.

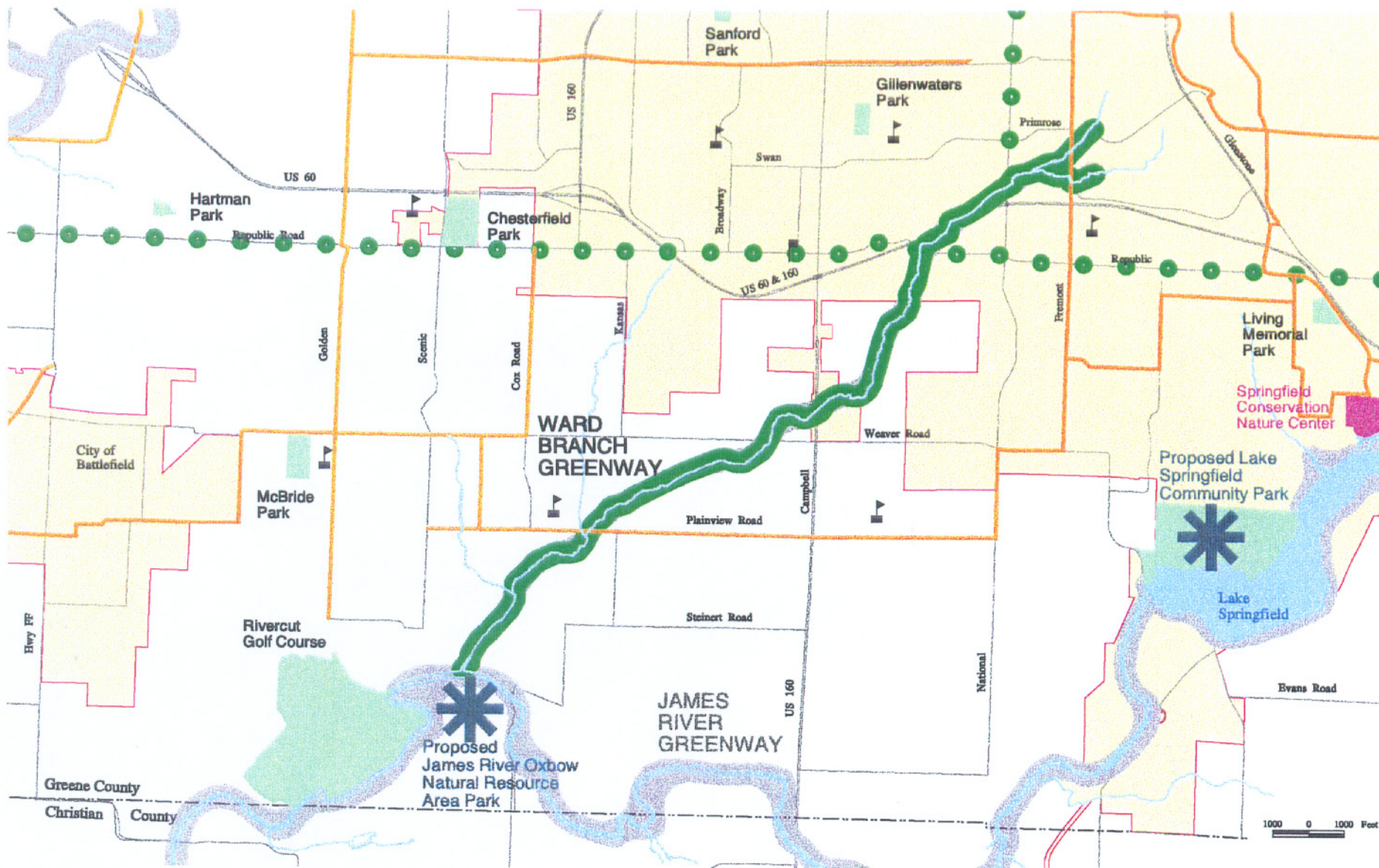
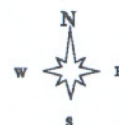
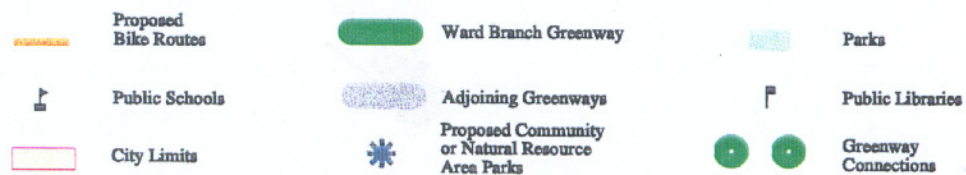


Figure 16
Ward Branch Greenway



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6. Park System

History of Park Development in Springfield and Greene County

Lafayette Park and Washington Park were the first parks platted in Springfield. Platted in 1869, they were actually located in the town of North Springfield. Most of Springfield parks were planned and built in the tradition of the City Beautiful movement that was associated with the “Grand Plans.” Springfield’s park system emerged with the creation of the Park Board in 1913. Grant Beach Park was the first park purchased by the Park Board in 1914. In 1916, a formalized Parks Master Plan was completed to serve as a guide in acquiring and developing future park sites. This master plan was developed during the City Beautiful Movement; a time when quality of civic architecture and public space design was at its peak. Phelps Grove, Grant Beach, and Silver Springs parks were developed from 1914 to 1918 and the development of Fassnight, Smith and Doling parks followed from 1925 to the early 1930’s. Sequiota Park, originally a fish hatchery, became an excursion train ride for Springfieldians escaping the heat and hectic nature of the city. National Avenue developed as a “grand parkway” with trees and residences lining the corridor providing a park-like setting along a transportation corridor. Many of these early parks, established from a movement to preserve land, provide respite from urban pressures, and accommodate recreational opportunity remain Springfield favorites in part due to the characteristics developed during the City Beautiful movement.

In the 1964 Comprehensive Plan a neighborhood-community concept encouraged centrally located neighborhood parks and schools and links between each neighborhood. The 1976 Springfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan took an extensive look at the parks and recreation facilities, programs, and organizational structure of the park system. The *Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment for Greene County, Missouri* prepared in 1992 was conducted to assist Greene County in planning for future outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. In 1996, a joint city-county park board formed with the citizens approval of the Springfield-Greene County Park Board.

Historic Parks

Historic parks are those parks planned and built prior to 1935 and influenced by the American City Beautiful movement. They are identified by their distinct architectural, cultural, and historical features. Most of the historic parks have distinct architectural style featuring field stone. Historic Parks are not a separate park classification, but a designation based on the era of the park and its historical significance to the community. The parks in the Springfield-Greene County Park System with historical significance include:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ⓒ Doling Park | Ⓒ Silver Springs Park |
| Ⓒ Dickerson Park Zoo | Ⓒ Smith Park |
| Ⓒ Fassnight Park | Ⓒ Washington Park |
| Ⓒ Lafayette Park | |
| Ⓒ Phelps Grove Park | |
| | |
| Ⓒ Sequiota Park | |

The historic parks display a distinct character. It is important to continue with the themes of the early development of the parks and the park system. The stone structures and retaining walls, brick walkways, historic lighting, furniture, and landscaping should be retained or returned as appropriate.

These parks are important to Springfield because of their ties with the past. Historic parks were traditionally central to life in days gone by and were important elements of life to people growing up in Springfield. They provided a place to play, gather, and exhibit the creativity and energy of the growing community. It is important to remember this era in the development of Springfield.

Trends - The Role of Private Recreation Facilities

With changing lifestyles, play formerly occurring in public parks is now provided in restaurant play facilities (e.g. McDonald's, Chuck E Cheese) or in specific commercial play facilities (e.g. Discovery Zone). The YMCA provides facilities and experiences similar to family recreation centers. Private softball complexes replace potential demand for public facilities. Many churches provide recreation facilities and parks. Country clubs and private golf courses satisfy some of the demand for golf, tennis, etc. Many subdivisions offer park and recreation facilities. Other commercial recreation businesses provide mini-golf, bowling, fitness, and other opportunities.

The public park system can't provide all of the recreational needs of public - private facilities are also an important asset. It is important to realize the role of private resources in providing parks, open space, greenways, and recreational opportunities for people in Greene County. The Springfield-Greene County park system should attempt to complement and support these other efforts to provide the best and most efficient parks open space, and greenway opportunities.

Existing Built-up Areas

While the city has expanded over the past 30 years, the acquisition of park land has not kept pace with the residential growth in the Springfield area. The community has developed park land during the past thirty years, though, all of the property has been acquired through gifts or donations to the city. The tremendous growth in the southern portion of city and the unincorporated areas of Greene County in recent years has occurred without the benefit of park land acquisition, leaving this area of the community currently unserved by parks. There are also pockets in older sections of the city that are unserved by parks. In addition, many of the existing neighborhood parks do not provide the maximum service to the community because of barriers created by major streets, because the parks are actually left over remnants of land, or because the parks have poor access for the general public. It will be difficult to provide additional park land in built-up areas since the land is generally already developed. Some recommendations for park land expansion in built-up areas will take many years to complete and will require redevelopment activities to meet these needs.

As a result of the lack of park land in certain areas of the community, some publicly-owned properties have evolved into shared use facilities. Lake Springfield, is an example of a shared-use facility as the open space adjacent to the lake and James River Power Station has been developed as a community-serving recreational area. While shared

facilities and properties are encouraged and desirable from a fiscally responsible perspective, the community cannot rely solely on shared facilities and donated properties to sustain our park system.

Future Development Areas

Most future development will occur in the unincorporated portions of Greene County, and this is where most of the park land opportunity exists. The developing areas must receive the highest priority for land acquisition. Land acquisition must receive the highest priority (versus park development) until park land acquisition catches up with development trends. Otherwise, the land will be used up for development and it will be as difficult to acquire land.

Proposed Park System

The proposed park system, if implemented according to this plan, will meet the varied needs of the community for generations to come. The natural drainage patterns of the metropolitan area will provide the framework of a park system that features greenways, large community parks along the greenways, neighborhood parks and school-parks, special use parks, sports complexes and family recreation centers, and Civic Park in downtown Springfield. Natural, cultural, and historic resources will be preserved and enhanced throughout the system.

As one of the most important quality of life components, the park system must exhibit quality in design, construction, and maintenance. It should be a source of pride and help improve the local economy by inducing visitors to the area and encouraging economic investment in the community.

In order to create the proposed park system, it is necessary to place policies in effect now that will preserve the land and resources for future acquisition. Land acquisition must be a high priority since land is rapidly being consumed for urban development. Financial provisions must also be placed into effect to pay for the future park system. In other words, we must get "ahead of the curve" if future generations are going to enjoy the benefits of the proposed park system.

Table 3, below, shows the existing and proposed parks and facilities that comprise the Park System.

Table 3
Proposed Springfield-Greene County Park System

Mini Parks

Champion Park
Edna Norris Park
Hawthorn Park
Kirkwood Park
Lurvey Park
Ooley Park
Parkwood Park

Neighborhood Parks

Gillenwaters Park
Glenwood Park
Hartman Park
Jenny Lincoln Park
Nichols Park
Oak Grove Park
Overhill Park
Ray Kelly Park
Sanford Park
Silver Springs Park
Smith Park
Washington Park
Watkins Park
Youngs-Lily Park
Zagonyi Park

School-Parks

Bingham/Miles School-Park
Bissett/Wise School-Park
Carver School-Park
Cherokee School-Park
Cowden School-Park
Disney School-Park
Fairbanks/Grant Beach School-Park
Field School-Park
Fremont School-Park
Hickory Hills School-Park
Holland School-Park
Horace Mann School-Park
McBride School-Park
McGregor School-Park
Pershing School-Park
Reed/Lafayette School-Park
Robberson School-Park
Shady Dell School-Park
Truman School-Park
Wanda Gray School-Park
Weaver/Grant Beach School-Park
Westport School-Park

Chesterfield Park
Doling Park
Fassnight Park
Grant Beach Park
McDaniel Park
Phelps Grove Park
Sequoiota Park

Metropolitan Community Parks

Lake Springfield
Pierson Creek Park
Ritter Springs Park
Valley Water Mill
Wilsons Creek

Special Use Parks and Facilities

Dickerson Park Zoo
Doling Community & Northview Sr. Centers
Family Recreation Centers (3)
Fellows Lake
Horton Smith Golf Course
Ice Rink
James Ewing Complex
Jenny Lincoln Community Center
Living Memorial Park
Loren Street Park
McDaniel Lake
Nathanael Greene Park
Oak Grove Community Center
O'Reilly Gymnasium
Ozark Empire Fairgrounds
Ray Kelly Senior Center
Rivercut Golf Course
Sac River Trail
Springfield Skatepark
Stewart Golf Course (incl. Oscar Blom G.C.)
Watkins Community Center

Sports Complexes

Cooper / Killian Tennis and Softball Complex
Ewing Sports Complex
Meador Sports Complex
(1) New and (2) Replacement Complexes

Civic Park

Natural Resource Area Parks

Clear Creek Springs
George Washington Carver Park
James River Oxbow
Lost Hill
McCraw's Ford
Rountree Spring

Urban Community Parks

Management and Maintenance

Given the availability of funding, the maintenance of the park system has been adequate. However, the entire park system needs a higher level of maintenance. Maintenance is a key component in having a quality park system and many of Springfield's parks suffer from the lack of care in facilities such as buildings, drainageways, parking lots, etc. To maintain the current park system at a higher level, as well as providing a higher level of maintenance for the future park, open space, and greenway system, additional funding must be a priority. In addition, the community, and specifically park users should be encouraged to care for and maintain their park system. Adopt-A-Park programs and other initiatives allow the community direct participation in the maintenance of parks and allow all citizens to take pride in their park system. Improvements to park system management and maintenance are discussed in the *Administration Operations and Maintenance Section* of this plan.

Park System Recommendations

- C Actively pursue the acquisition of park land in areas of the community where park land is inadequate or nonexistent
- C Modify the current strategy in the Capital Improvement Program to set aside money for park acquisition as well as park development.
- C Ensure that designated park sites are secured for future use prior to being developed.
- C Promote the unique nature of our historic parks to understand and appreciate their role in the history and cultural development of Springfield and Greene County.
- C Preserve and enhance the character of the historic parks so they retain or regain their original appearance and feel. All planning, design, construction, and maintenance should respect the historic character and nature of the park.
- C Encourage the development of parks and facilities that are located and face street and public rights-of-way. Discourage the practice of placing parks behind other developments with limited public access
- C Integrate public improvements into existing and future parks and assure that these public improvements are compatible in a park setting. (e.g., streets, water, sewer, gas and electric lines, stormwater management facilities, etc.)
- C Integrate stormwater management facilities into parks and design facilities that are functional (stormwater management) as well as aesthetic (attractive water feature).
- C Encourage subdivisions to be connected to the park, open space, and greenway system by pedestrian and bicycle facilities, especially along natural drainageways.
- C Provide convenient connections using trails and greenway corridors between parks and neighborhoods and activity centers as development occurs.
- C Use recycled products and other environmentally friendly techniques when designing and developing parks, facilities and furniture.
- C Establish a Planning and Design Division within the Park Department for the planning and design of parks and greenway corridors.
- C Establish joint-use agreements between all participating agencies that will promote the sharing of land facilities and resources, provide a framework of understanding for all agencies involved in a project, avoid conflict, and eliminate duplication of services.
- C Develop design and landscape standards for the entire park system.
- C Develop a theme signage program to unify the park, open space, and greenway system.
- C Develop and promote an Adopt-A-Park Program to encourage the community to participate in the maintenance and "ownership" of the park system.
- C Establish a land trust to help acquire and manage land prior to becoming part of the park, open, space and greenway system.

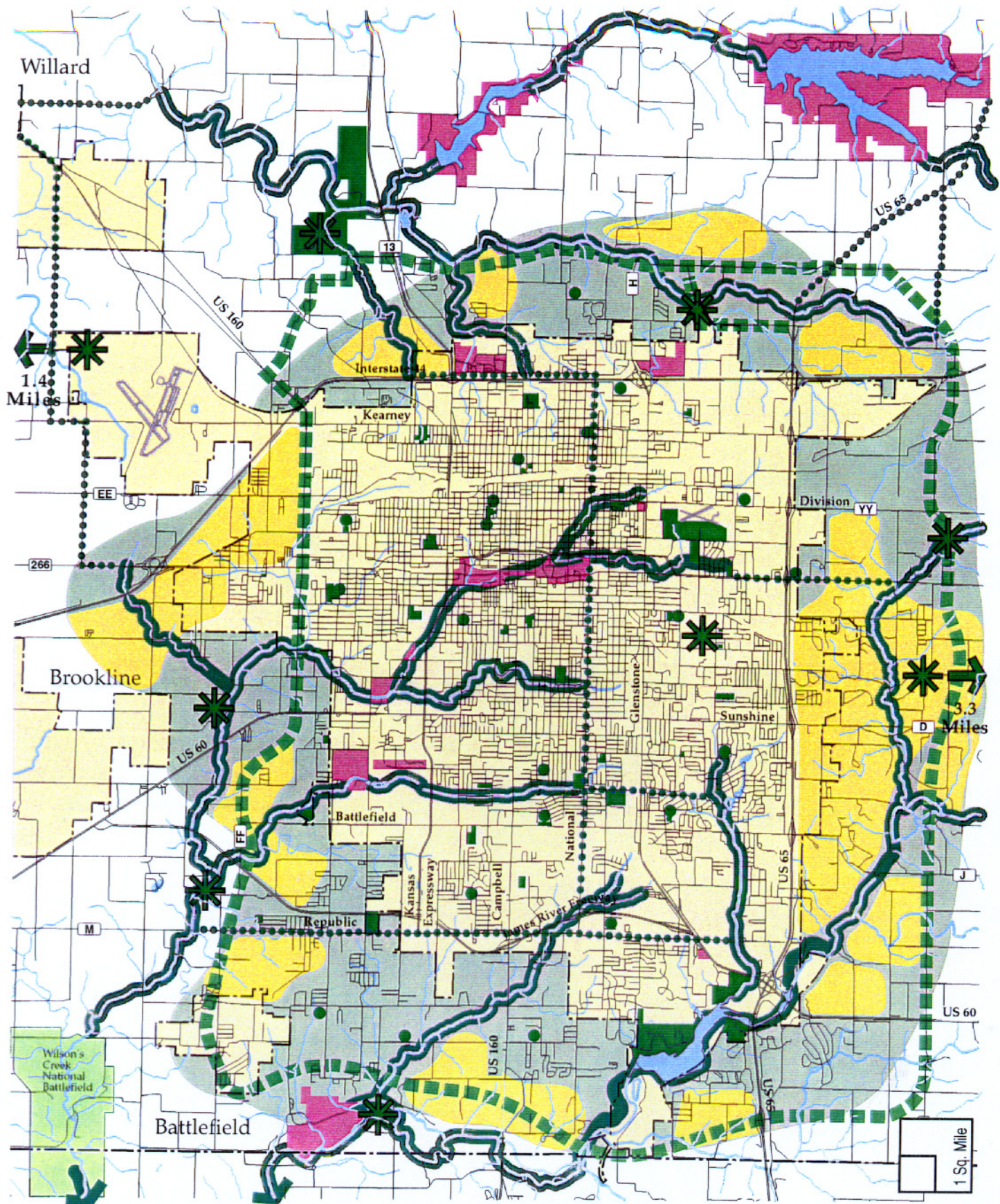
Specific Park System Descriptions and Recommendations

The park system consists of a variety of parks which vary in type, size, location and use depending on its classification. The following section includes descriptions and maps for each park classification as follows:

- C Mini-Parks
- C Neighborhood Parks
- C School-Parks
- C Urban Community Parks
- C Metropolitan Community Parks
- C Special Use Parks and Facilities
- C Sports Complexes
- C Civic Park

Each park will be discussed according to its classification in Table 1, *Park, Open Space, and Greenway System - 1998 Classification and Guidelines*. Recommendations for improvements to existing parks and development of new parks are provided for each park classification and each individual park.

Figure 17, Springfield-Greene County Park, Open Space and Greenway System Plan, below, shows the existing and proposed parks and facilities that comprise the Park System.



South Creek-Wilson's Creek Greenway connects to James River Greenway

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Parks | Parkway (Conceptual) |
| Special Use Parks and Facilities | Future Growth Area |
| Greenways | City Boundary |
| Greenway Connections | Park Search Area |

Figure 17
Springfield-Greene County Park,
Open Space, and Greenway System Plan



Springfield-Greene County
Comprehensive Plan

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Mini-Parks

Definition

A mini-park is a small area intended to satisfy a limited number of needs for children, youth, and adults. It may serve as a modified neighborhood park and may have a supervised summer playground.

Role

A mini-park is the smallest park classification and is used to address limited or isolated recreational needs. Examples include:

- C Concentrated or limited populations;
- C Isolated development areas;
- C Unique recreational opportunities;
- C Landscaped or other public use area in an industrial/commercial area;
- C Scenic overlook; and
- C A modified neighborhood park when there is not sufficient land available for a neighborhood park or not a large neighborhood population to serve.

In Springfield, mini-parks are not intended for every neighborhood, but only in special circumstances as suggested above. They should have specific users in mind and a plan for the management and maintenance of the mini-park.

Character

Mini-Parks are typically less than five (5) acres in size. Typical activities include play structures, "informal" open space, and limited hard surface play areas. In addition, internal walkways that connect to the neighborhood sidewalks, picnic/sitting areas, open space, and "people watching" areas offer an appropriate setting for social interaction, quiet relaxation, and passive recreation. The mini-park is also well suited for specialty projects - neighborhood gardens, beautification projects, and improvements.

Location Criteria

Mini-parks will not be systematically planned but will be strategically located to meet needs of situations listed above. They should be located on residential, local, or collector streets and not on major streets (freeways, expressways and primary arterials). Mini-park locations should be open and accessible to public streets on two sides and heavily screened on any side abutting other land uses. They should not be developed on properties where they are enclosed or divided by residential and commercial development which makes parks less visible, uninviting, and inconvenient to the neighborhood or community. Figure 18, below indicates the Mini-Parks in the proposed park system.

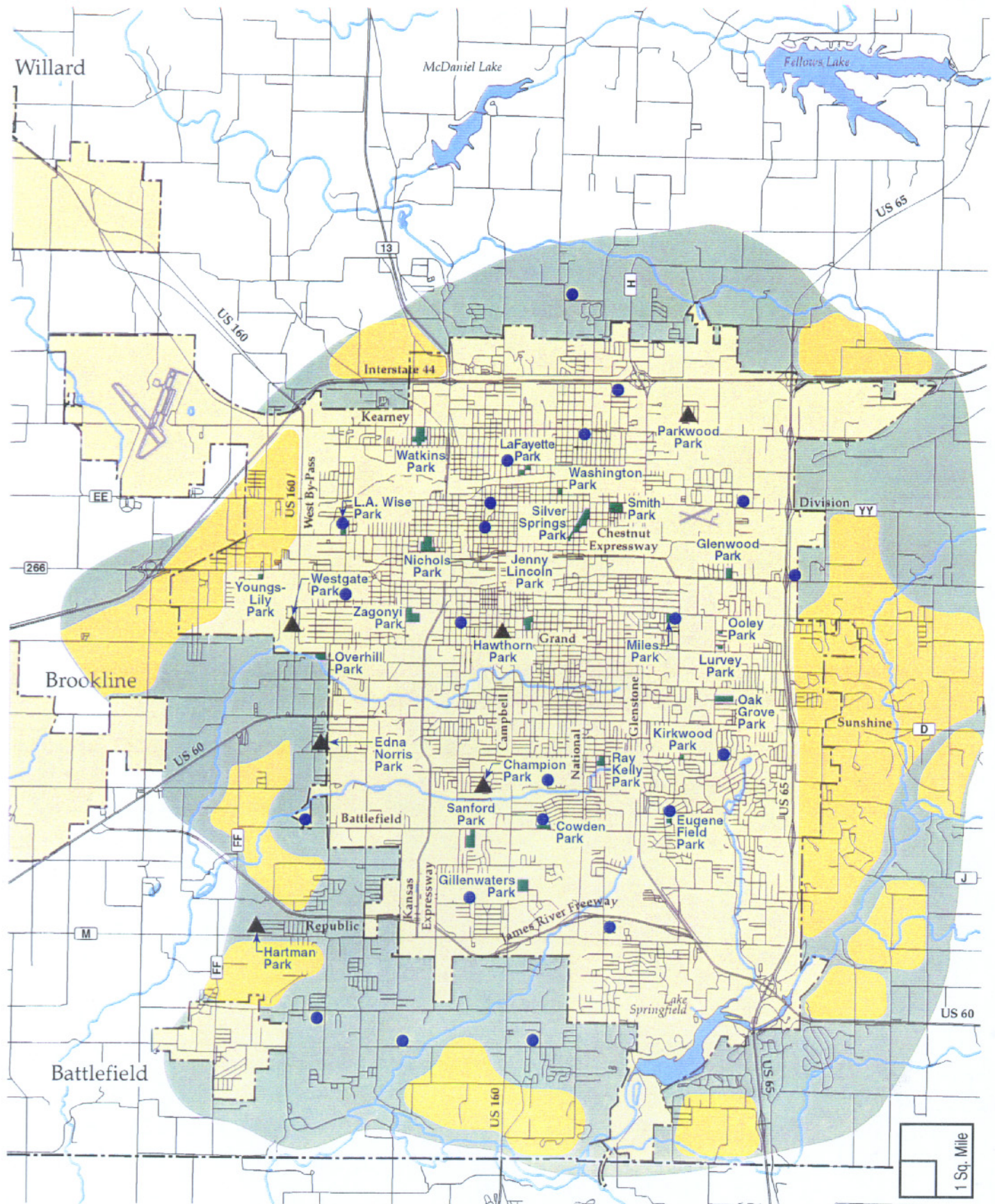


Figure 18
Mini Parks and Neighborhood Parks

- Neighborhood Parks
- ▲ Mini Parks
- School-Parks
- City Boundary
- Future Growth Area
- Park Search Area



Springfield-Greene County
Comprehensive Plan

Mini-Parks Recommendations

Since mini-parks are only intended to be provided in special situations, each park site should be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine if their facilities are warranted in the neighborhood based on the circumstances mentioned above.

Below are the recommendations for individual mini-parks based on the 1997, *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation*.

Champion Park

- C Create a well-defined linkage from the park to the South Creek Greenway.
- C Connect the existing pathway to the neighborhood sidewalks for ease of pedestrian access.
- C Provide security lighting throughout the park.
- C Provide five pieces of playground equipment in the park.
- C Provide one picnic shelter in the park.
- C Provide one barbeque grill in the park.

Edna Norris Park

- C In order to serve the neighborhood, the park needs a well defined and inviting entrance from the neighborhood. Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the park (on at least two sides) as they become available to make this park more friendly and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Remove the barbed wire from the existing fence.
- C Provide a walkway system for the park.
- C Provide security lighting throughout the park.
- C Provide six pieces of playground equipment in the park.
- C Provide one picnic shelter in the park.
- C Provide three picnic tables in the park.
- C Provide two barbeque grills in the park.
- C Provide three benches in the park.

Hartman Park

- C Develop this park as a mini park. This park site was donated to the Springfield-Greene County Park Board in 1996.
- C Provide a walkway system for the park.
- C Provide security lighting throughout the park.
- C Provide six pieces of playground equipment in the park.
- C Provide one picnic shelter in the park.
- C Provide three picnic tables in the park.
- C Provide two barbeque grills in the park.
- C Provide three benches in the park.

Hawthorn Park

- C Consider the acquisition of the properties on the northwest corner of the park as they become available, to provide more visibility to Grant Avenue and to present an inviting appearance to the neighborhood.
- C Coordinate with City Utilities to identify and implement the most appropriate method to reduce the visual and physical intrusion of the existing overhead wires that bisect the park.

Kirkwood Park

- C Provide a walkway system for the park.
- C Provide security lighting throughout the park.
- C Provide one picnic table in the park.
- C Provide two barbeque grills in the park.
- C Provide one bench in the park.

Lurvey Park

- C In order to serve the neighborhood, the park needs a well defined and inviting entrance from the neighborhood. Consider the acquisition of properties along Oak Grove Avenue, Belmont Street, or Peach Tree as they become available to make this park more neighborhood friendly and accessible.
- C Provide a walkway system for the park.
- C Provide security lighting throughout the park.
- C Provide six pieces of playground equipment in the park.
- C Provide one picnic shelter in the park.
- C Provide three picnic tables in the park.
- C Provide two barbeque grills in the park.
- C Provide three benches in the park.

Ooley Park

- C Provide the facilities to function as a mini-park.
- C Provide a walkway system for the park.
- C Provide security lighting throughout the park.
- C Provide three additional pieces of playground equipment in the park.
- C Provide one picnic shelter in the park.
- C Provide three picnic tables in the park.
- C Provide two barbeque grills in the park.
- C Provide three benches in the park.

Parkwood Park

- C Provide the facilities to function as a mini-park.
- C Provide a walkway system for the park.
- C Provide security lighting throughout the park.
- C Provide three additional pieces of playground equipment in the park.
- C Provide one picnic shelter in the park.

Locations for Future Mini-Parks

If additional mini-parks are warranted, they should be provided in conjunction with schools, if at all possible.

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Neighborhood Parks

Definition

Neighborhood parks are developed for active and passive recreation geared specifically for those living within normal walking distance. Accommodating a wide variety of age and user groups, including children, adults, the elderly, and special populations is important. Creating a sense of place by bringing together the unique character of the site with that of the neighborhood is vital to successful design.

Role

Traditionally, the neighborhood park is the basic unit of the park system. The role of the neighborhood park is to serve people of all ages and abilities within normal walking distance (½ mile) of the park with a wide variety of recreational opportunities. However, it is unclear whether the neighborhood park will play a central role in the future of Springfield. There are indications that traditional neighborhood park functions are being met through private facilities, including common areas, playground areas, and pools located in subdivisions. In addition, only one-half of Springfieldians said that it is important to have a park within walking distance of their home. Addressing the role and provision of neighborhood parks is one of the most difficult issues of the park plan.

Character

The character of the neighborhood park should set the standard for neighborhood aesthetics, including landscaping, walkways, structures and fixtures. The park should also reflect the character of the neighborhood.

Development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between active and passive park uses. Active recreational facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner. Except for limited use by youth teams, neighborhood parks are not intended to be used for programmed activities. Competitive fields and programming may conflict with the peaceful nature of a neighborhood by creating overuse, excessive noise, parking problems, and traffic congestion in the park as well as the neighborhood. As a general rule, active recreational facilities should consume roughly 50 percent of the park's acreage. These facilities may include play structures, court games, "informal" playfields or open space, tennis courts, volleyball courts, shuffleboard courts, horseshoe area, ice skating area, wading pool, and activity room. The remaining 50 percent should be used for passive activities, open space, and conservation, including facilities for internal trails (that could connect to the greenway system), picnic/sitting areas, general open space, and "people watching" areas. Developing an appealing park atmosphere should be considered an important design element.

A neighborhood park should include 7 to 10 parking spaces for use by those who choose or need to drive to the park. Park lighting should be used for security and safety, with very limited lighting on facilities.

If the neighborhood park is a historic park, it should reflect the distinct history of the community, neighborhood, and park site. A standard for design and maintenance should be established for these parks to preserve and enhancing their historic character.

Location Criteria

It is not always feasible due to space and cost limitations to place neighborhood parks within walking distance of everyone and it is not clear that people expect or desire this. Springfield is developed (and developing) at approximately 2,000 - 2,600 persons per square mile; a low population density for having a neighborhood park in each square mile. However, neighborhood parks are important to many people and important to the urban landscape. So the question posed in this plan is *under what circumstances do we provide neighborhood parks?*

There are extensive areas throughout the community that are unserved or under served by neighborhood park facilities. However, neighborhood parks should only be provided in unserved or underserved as a response to community desire. If a neighborhood or a segment of the community desires additional park land, each site should be evaluated as it relates to the facilities and policies of the park system. Most important is the need to plan for and acquire park land in advance of or concurrent with development. It is much easier and more cost effective to acquire land before it is developed, than after the fact. In addition, private recreation facilities (subdivision common areas, fitness centers, etc.) should be considered when neighborhood parks are developed. While private facilities won't completely fulfill neighborhood recreation needs, they may have an impact on the location and types of facilities provided in public neighborhood parks.

Regardless of where neighborhood parks are located in the community, they must relate to the neighborhood that it serves. Therefore, neighborhood parks should be centrally located within the neighborhood. It is important for neighborhood parks to be located on residential-local or -collector streets and not on major streets (freeways, expressways and primary arterials). A connection to other parks and the greenway system is also important for access throughout the community. The park should be convenient for the entire neighborhood with street frontage on at least three sides, preferably on four. Neighborhood parks should not be developed on properties where they are enclosed, subservient or "behind" other development, thereby limiting public visibility and access. In addition, they should not be left-over parcels of land or poorly drained with unsuitable soils and topography. If such parcels are not suited for development, they probably are not suited for a neighborhood park either. Figure 19, below indicates the Neighborhood Parks in the proposed park system.

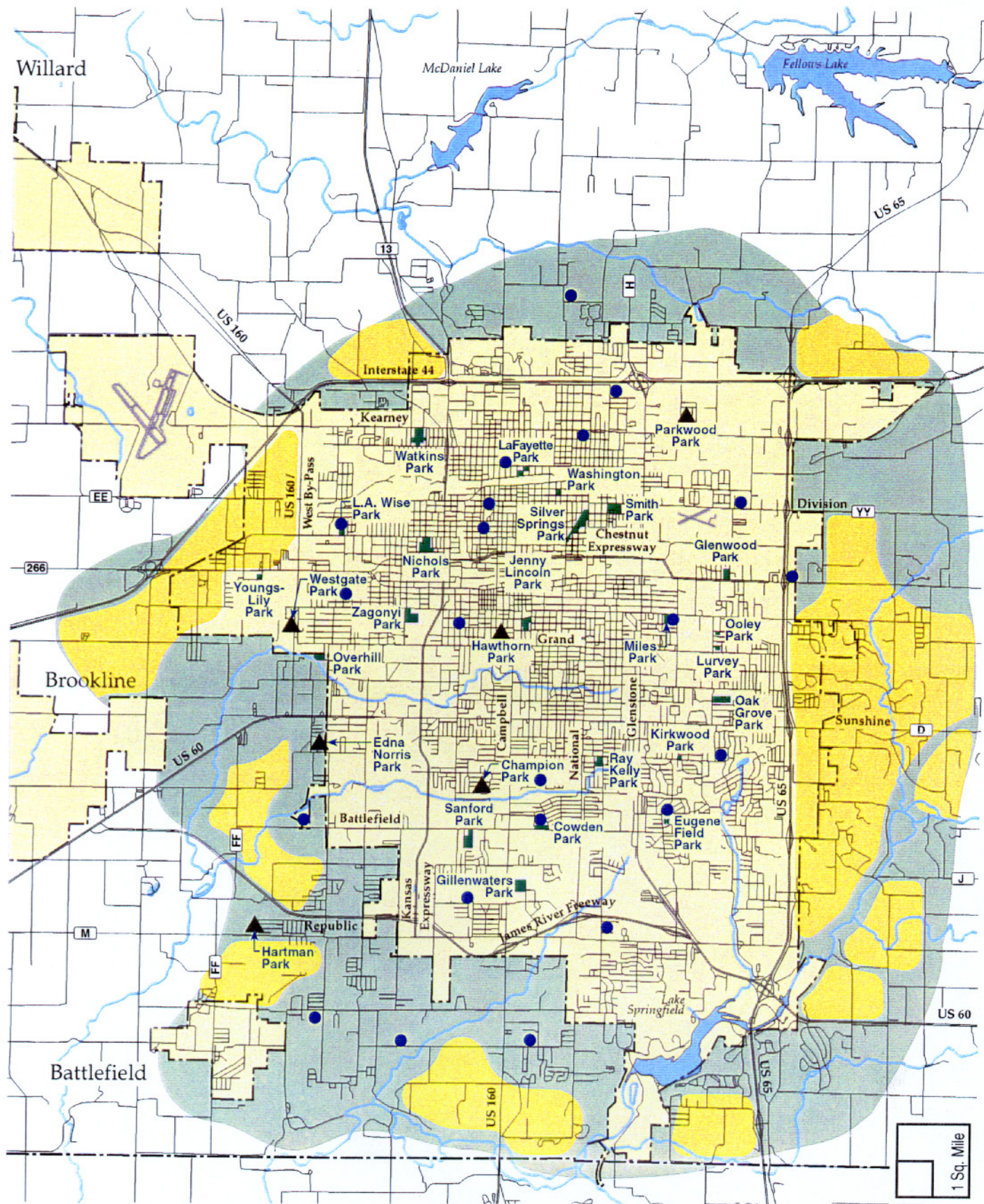


Figure 19
Neighborhood Parks and Mini Parks

Neighborhood Park Recommendations

- C Provide neighborhood parks in developed, unserved neighborhoods according to established need. Such need should be assessed based on:
 - C preponderance of young families and children
 - C desire of residents for the park
 - C available funding for park development
- C Utilize existing and proposed schools in conjunction with parks as a way to satisfy neighborhood park needs throughout the community.
- C Provide neighborhood parks in newly developing areas.
- C Adhere to neighborhood park location criteria when locating future neighborhood parks.
- C Prepare a site plan for each neighborhood park (existing and proposed) and use that plan to improve access, circulation, maintenance, and to develop priorities and schedules for improvements to deficient parks.

Below are the recommendations for individual neighborhood parks based on the 1997, *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation*.

Gillenwaters Park

- C Develop more neighborhood facilities on the existing property so that the park serves a neighborhood park function.
- C Incorporate a water feature/focal point in the existing drainageway through the park.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide two (2) benches.
- C Provide two (2) pieces of playground equipment.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Glenwood Park

- C Redesign the stormwater management facility and incorporate into the design of the park to allow more park facilities and open play areas while still satisfying the stormwater objectives.
- C Provide park facilities on the north portion of the park adjacent to the existing residential dwellings.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Develop a trailhead and trail as part of the Jordan Creek Greenway (south branch). The trailhead should include a signage, greenway information, and trail maps.
- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide five (5) benches.
- C Provide four (4) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.

Hartman Park (donated/acquired 1997)

- C Prepare a site plan for the layout and future development of the park and its facilities according to proposed Neighborhood Park Guidelines.
- C Provide linkages to this park as surrounding undeveloped areas are converted residential uses.

- C Provide a direct linkage between the park and the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway along the existing stream that flows from the site to the northwest. An alternative linkage should be considered along Republic Rd. (M Highway).

Jenny Lincoln Park

- C Consider developing a community garden area to serve the senior citizen population in the area.
- C Strengthen the pedestrian linkage between the park and the Greater Downtown District including Civic Park.
- C Provide a water fountain.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Nichols Park

- C Continue to upgrade the park and providing all the facilities of a neighborhood park.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the park, as they become available, to allow more residential street frontage and present an inviting appearance to the neighborhood.
- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide four (4) benches.

Oak Grove Park

- C In order to serve the neighborhood, the park needs a well defined and inviting entrance. Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the park, as they become available, to make this park more friendly and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Expand and upgrade the community center to accommodate additional programming activities.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide five (5) benches.
- C Provide two (2) picnic tables.

Overhill Park

- C Prepare a redevelopment plan (Chapter 99 RSMo) for the Overhill neighborhood and park. The plan should address acquisition of housing north and east of the park to open up the park and allow for expansion.
- C In order to serve the neighborhood, the park needs a well defined and inviting entrance. Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the park to make this park more friendly and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Integrate the park with the adjacent Westside Optimist Club ball fields.
- C Develop a trailhead and establish a clear linkage to the proposed Jordan Creek Greenway.
- C Work with the Westside Betterment Association to create "Adopt a Park" and "Neighborhood Watch" programs in the neighborhood.
- C Increase security for the park.
- C Upgrade the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.

- C Improve the appearance of the parking lot by adding landscaping and clearly defining the parking lot layout.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood and greenway.
- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide eight (10) benches.
- C Provide six (6) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Upgrade the existing playground equipment and provide three (3) additional pieces of playground equipment.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Ray Kelly Park

- C Upgrade the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C In order to serve the neighborhood, the park needs a well defined and inviting entrance. Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the north east section of the park to the park to provide more area for park activities and make this park more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Continue to expand the Senior Center services and facilities to serve the community, as needed. Improve circulation and provide additional permanent parking spaces for the Center.
- C Maintain the neighborhood park setting even as the Senior Center expands its services. The Senior Center facility expansion should be in conjunction with the expansion of park land.
- C Provide and encourage community use of the center after normal operating hours of the Senior Center.
- C Provide a small portion of the park for community garden use.
- C Provide a 10 parking spaces for park users. This should be achieved by designating several spaces in the existing parking lot as well as providing a few spaces on the west side of the park.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide a water fountain.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide five (5) benches.
- C Provide six (3) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Sanford Park

- C In order to serve the neighborhood, the park needs a well defined and inviting entrance. Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the park to make this park more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.

- C Provide up to 10 parking spaces for park users, including designating some parking spaces along Franklin Avenue.
- C Provide a clear linkage between Sanford Park and the Erie and Ferguson sinkholes, including a walkway system.
- C Upgrade the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide a water fountain.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide five (5) benches.
- C Provide six (3) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.
- C Acquire and remove some houses along Franklin as they become available to open up the visibility of the park and provide public access. Sell the Battlefield Road frontage.

Silver Springs Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C Connect Silver Springs Park with Smith park by acquiring property between the two parks along Jordan Creek and opening up the culvert.
- C Improve and clearly define the linkage along the Jordan Creek Greenway (north branch) between Silver Springs Park, Smith Park and the proposed Civic Park.
- C Incorporate a trail through the park as a part of the Jordan Creek Greenway (north branch).
- C Incorporate a water feature/focal point in Jordan Creek through the park to allow public interaction with the stream.
- C Repair and improve the channel and retaining walls through the park. Special attention should be given to the preservation of the WPA-era limestone walls lining the Jordan Creek.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide one (1) barbeque grill.
- C Provide one (1) additional water fountain.

Smith Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.

- C Improve and clearly define the linkage along the Jordan Creek Greenway (north branch) between Smith Park and Silver Springs Park.
- C Develop a trailhead and incorporate a trail through the park as a part of the Jordan Creek Greenway (north branch). Ensure the greenway trail is linked to Evangel College. The trailhead should include signage, greenway information, and trail maps.
- C Incorporate a water feature/focal point in Jordan Creek through the park to allow public interaction with the stream.
- C Repair and improve the channel and retaining walls through the park. Special attention should be given to the preservation of the WPA-era limestone walls lining the Jordan Creek.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.

Washington Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C Upgrade the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Designate up to 10 parking spaces for park users.
- C Upgrade the picnic shelter to a historically appropriate structure.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide five (5) benches.
- C Provide three (3) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Tom Watkins Park

- C In order to serve the neighborhood, the park needs a well defined and inviting entrance. Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the park to make this park more inviting and accessible.
- C Improve and repair the existing community center building to include an activity center with large meeting rooms that serve the neighborhood. A gymnasium and swimming pool are not recommended since those facilities are currently provided at Doling Park, located within 1½ miles of Watkins Park.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide a water fountain.

Youngs-Lily Park

- C Establish an orchard in the park as a reminder to the community of the role of the former Youngs Orchard located in the area and for public interpretation and education.
- C Create a full service neighborhood park.
- C Provide 10 parking spaces for park users.
- C Create an attractive entrance to the park from the neighborhood.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.

- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide eight (8) benches.
- C Provide four (4) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Zagonyi Park

- C Coordinate with the Boys and Girls Club to develop a program for shared land and facilities, including additional indoor facilities.
- C Redesign the park layout to provide a portion of the playground facilities on the east side of the park, near the multi-family housing.
- C Develop linkage to connect the park and neighborhood with the nearby Jordan Creek Greenway trail.
- C Provide a restroom facility in the park.
- C Provide two (2) additional benches.

Locations for Future Neighborhood Parks

There are several areas in the community lacking neighborhood parks. Most of the need for future Neighborhood Parks can be fulfilled by developing school-parks in conjunction with the Springfield Public school System. The locations and descriptions of these school-parks are found in the next section, *School-Parks*. However, even with the development of school-parks, there are still areas of the community unserved by neighborhood parks.

Some built-up or rapidly growing areas of the community still lack neighborhood park facilities. Potential parks site locations should be evaluated and discussed on a case by case basis with the neighborhood. Together, staff and the neighborhood should determine the needs of the neighborhood, a park site location, a land acquisition and development schedule, and funding sources.

In addition to built-up areas of the community, there are future development areas on the fringe of the existing urbanized area that should accommodate neighborhood parks. An evaluation of these areas for future neighborhood parks should occur in advance of proposed development. Then, as development occurs adequate park land can be set aside in appropriate locations to serve these new neighborhoods.

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School-Parks

Definition

A major theme of *Vision 20/20* is that public entities should share land and facilities. Through the combined efforts of multiple units of local government, facilities and services can be more efficiently utilized and delivered to citizens. The idea of school-parks is an example of this concept. A school-park is described as:

A facility which combines a park, a school, a playground and other recreation facilities into a single unit for education, recreation, and related social and community activities. The result is more than simply the concentration of these facilities on a single site. It is a functional unit designed to include mutually supportive programs of education, recreation and community activities.

The school-park concept encourages the combination of school facilities and park facilities into one unified site, designed to function as one park, shared by the school and general public.

Role

The successful design of a school-park will create a sense of place by bringing together the unique character of the site with that of the neighborhood. Generally, school-parks will serve as neighborhood parks and will provide active and passive recreation facilities for a diverse population including children, adults, the elderly, and special populations. The size and amenities offered by a school-park will usually complement the needs and play facilities provided with a school.

Character

A school-park should be designed to satisfy the needs of the school during their regular hours of operation, including recess and physical education periods, while accommodating use by the general public. Thus, the school-age facilities would be located closer to the school building, with the picnicking and more passive park functions located farther away.

A school-park ranges from 5 to 20 acres of park land and includes a layout and activities similar to that of a neighborhood park. Active recreation facilities include play structures, court games, "informal" playfields and open space. While passive activities in the school-park may include, trails, picnic/sitting areas, "people watching" areas, open space, and conservation areas. Many school-parks could include areas that serve as outdoor classrooms for on-site field trips.

Multi-purpose recreation centers or sports facilities could also be provided in conjunction with a school, whereby the gymnasium, pool or other facilities would be shared. These facilities should be designed to accommodate school functions as well as general public functions during non-school hours (e.g., gymnasium seating, meeting rooms, restrooms, secured school facility, etc.).

School-Park Management and Maintenance

Establishing a clearly defined joint-use agreement between involved agencies is critical to making school-park relationships workable. This is particularly important with respect to acquisition, development, maintenance, liability, use, and facility programming issues.

Location Criteria

The location of school-parks follows the same criteria as neighborhood parks. Existing built-up areas of the city that lack neighborhood-serving parks should be the top priority for the development of neighborhood parks. The next area of focus for neighborhood parks should be in the undeveloped areas on the fringe of the urbanized area. Developing areas generally contain younger families needing parks close to them. More importantly planning for and acquiring park land in advance of or concurrent with development is much easier and more cost effective than after the fact. Lastly, private recreation facilities (subdivision, fitness centers, etc.) should be considered as neighborhood parks are developed. While private facilities won't completely fulfill neighborhood recreation needs, they may have an impact on the location and types of facilities provided in public neighborhood parks.

School-parks should be centrally located within the neighborhood. It is important for neighborhood parks to be located on residential- local or -collector streets and not on major streets (freeways, expressways and primary arterials). A connection to other parks and the greenway system is also important for access throughout the community. The park should be convenient for the entire neighborhood with street frontage on at least three sides, preferably on four. School-parks should not be developed on properties where they are enclosed, subservient or "behind" other development, thereby limiting public visibility and access. In addition, they should not be left-over parcels of land or poorly drained with unsuitable soils and topography. If such parcels are not suited for development, they probably are not suited for a neighborhood park either. Figure 20, below indicates the School- Parks in the proposed park system.

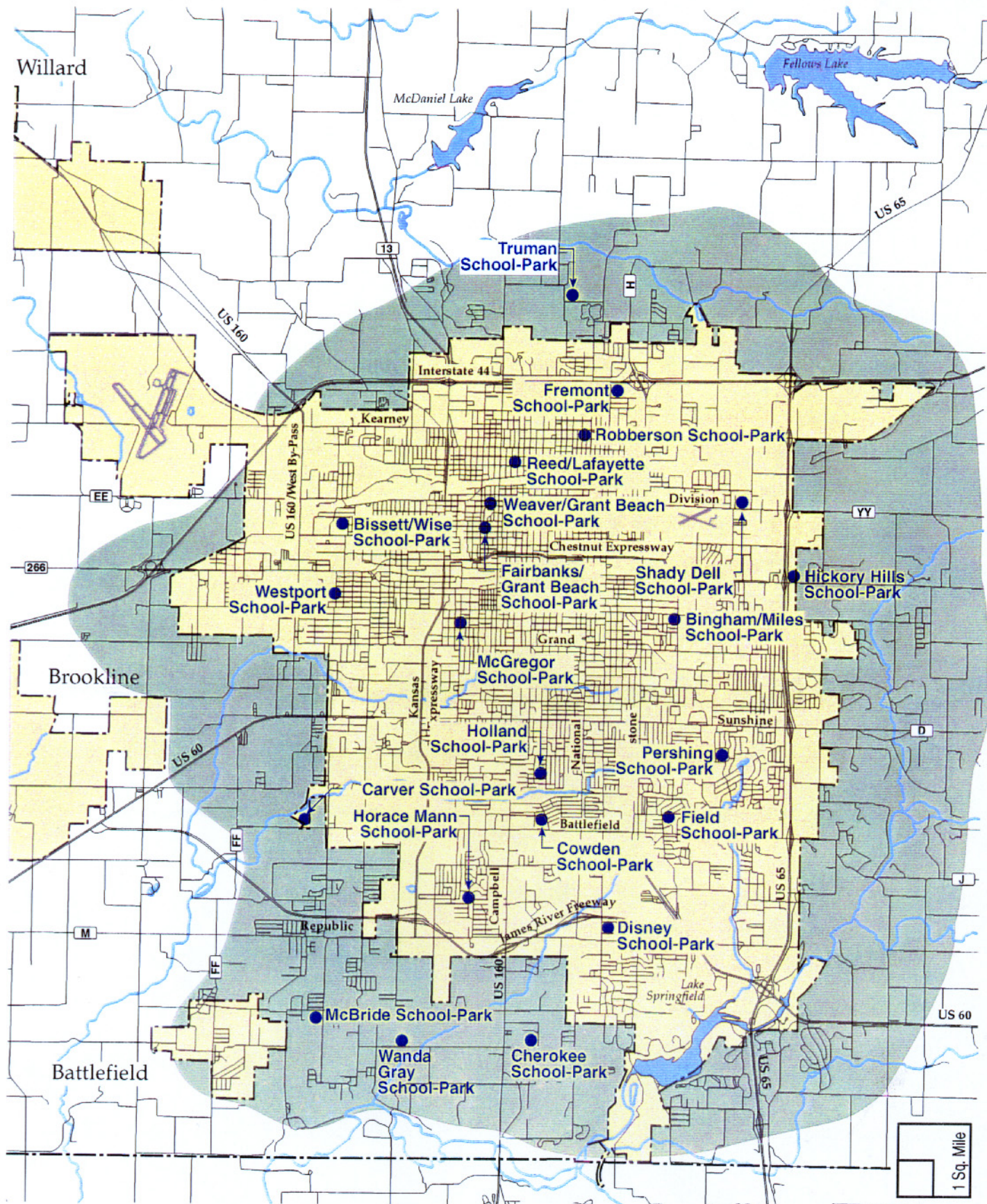


Figure 20
School - Parks

- School-Park
- City Boundary
- Urban Service Area Boundary, Year 2020
- Future Growth Area



Springfield-Greene County
Comprehensive Plan

School-Park Recommendations

- C Provide 22 school-parks in conjunction with the schools as described below and shown on Figure 20.
- C Fully utilize designated schools for park and recreation use.
- C Acquisition of land for new schools should include additional land for park activities.
- C Existing schools designated as school-parks should be redeveloped as one site. If necessary acquire additional land around existing schools to provide adequate park land.
- C Establish a general use agreement between the City and the Public School System for scope, commitments, procedures, and guidelines for school-parks.
- C Review and update the school-park locations on an annual basis.
- C Develop an implementation program for the proposed school-parks. Review and update the implementation priorities annually.
- C Develop a site plan for all proposed school-park sites.
- C Develop a maintenance program for the proposed school-parks between the Springfield-Greene County Park Board and the Springfield Public School System
- C Adhere to neighborhood park location criteria when locating future neighborhood parks.

Below are the recommendations for individual school-parks based on the 1997, *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation*.

Bingham/Miles School-Park

The school is located at 2126 E. Cherry Street and adjacent to Miles Park. There are 7.0 acres of school property and 7.0 acres of park property.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the school-park, as they become available, to make it more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Designate 10 parking spaces in the existing parking lot or provide 10 additional parking spaces for park users.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide seven (7) benches.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Bissett/Wise School-Park

The school is located at 3014 W. Calhoun St. L.A. Wise Park is located south and adjacent to the school at 3100 W. Nichols Street. There are 6.0 acres of school property and 5.5 acres of park property.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide 10 parking spaces for park users.
- C Create an attractive entrance from Nichols Street to link the neighborhood to the south. Include several parking spaces on the south side of the park.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide eight (8) benches.
- C Provide six (6) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Replace the damaged playground equipment and provide one (1) additional piece of playground equipment.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Carver School-Park

The school is located on 35 acres of land at 3325 W. Battlefield. Approximately 12 acres are available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school and neighborhood to the South Creek Greenway.

Cherokee School-Park

The school is located on 18.3 acres of land at 420 E. Plainview Road. Approximately 10 acres are available for park use.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the school-park, as they become available, to make it more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.

Cowden School-Park

The school is located adjacent to Cowden Park at 2927 S. Kimbrough Av. There are 8.2 acres of school property and 7.0 acres of park property.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.

- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the school-park, as they become available, to make it more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Designate parking spaces in the existing parking lot or provide additional parking for park users.
- C Improve pedestrian linkages from the surrounding neighborhood (particularly south of the park) and minimize the physical barrier created by Battlefield Road.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide eight (8) benches.
- C Provide six (6) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Disney School-Park

The school is located on 17.5 acres of land at 4100 S. Fremont. Three to five acres are available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the school-park, as they become available, to make it more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school and neighborhood to the Ward Branch Greenway.

Field School-Park

The school is located adjacent to Eugene Field Park at 2120 Barataria Street. There are 6.0 acres of school property and 5.0 acres of park property.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood on the south.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the school-park, as they become available, to make it more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Designate 10 parking spaces in the existing parking lot or provide 10 additional parking spaces for park users.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide security lighting.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.

- C Provide a picnic shelter.
- C Provide eight (8) benches.
- C Provide six (6) picnic tables.
- C Provide two (2) barbeque grills.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Fairbanks/Grant Beach School-Park

The school is located at 1126 N. Broadway Av., one block southwest of Grant Beach Park. There are 2.5 acres of school property. Grant Beach Park contains 12.5 acres of property.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide streetscape and other design treatments to unify the school and park properties as one site.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the school or park, as they become available, to allow for additional neighborhood park facilities and to improve the linkage between the school and park.

Fremont School-Park

The school is located on 7.0 acres of land at 2814 N. Fremont Av. Approximately 4.0 acres are available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.

Hickory Hills School-Park

The school is located on 17.0 acres of land at 3429 E. Chestnut Expressway, just east of U.S. 65 Highway. Approximately 3.0 acres are available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance to the school as well as park.

Holland School-Park

The school is located on 9.0 acres of land at 2403 S. Holland Av. Approximately 3.0 acres are available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.

- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school and neighborhood to the South Creek Greenway and McDaniel Park trailhead.

Horace Mann School-Park

The school is located on 9.0 acres of land at 3745 S. Broadway Av. Approximately 3.0 acres are available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Acquire and incorporate/redevelop the tennis and swim club as a part of the school-park.

McBride School-Park

The school is being developed on 20.0 acres of land at 5005 S. Farm Road 135 (the intersection of Golden and Weaver). An additional 20.0 acres of land west of the school is reserved for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Coordinate the design and layout of both the school and park as the sites are developed. Ensure this school-park sets the standard for the development of other school-parks in the system.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.

McGregor School-Park

The school is currently located on 2.5 acres of land at 1221 W. Madison St.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Expand the existing school site to develop a school-park within the city block defined by Fort, State, New, and Madison streets.
- C Acquire the properties in the area mentioned above, as they become available, to provide for additional neighborhood park facilities and to make the school-park more inviting and accessible to the neighborhood.
- C Design the school-park as the focal point and gathering place for the neighborhood.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance(s) from the neighborhood.
- C Provide clearly defined linkages from the school to the neighborhood, Jordan Creek Greenway, and Civic Park.

Pershing School-Park

The school is located on 14.0 acres of land at 2120 S. Ventura Av. Approximately 3.0 acres are available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide the facilities to function as a neighborhood park.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school-park and neighborhood to the trailhead and Galloway Creek Greenway located south of the school.

Reed/Lafayette School-Park

There are 3.0 acres of property for school buildings and playgrounds located at 2000 N. Lyon Av. An additional 2.0 acres of activity field property is located one block southeast of the school. Lafayette Park is adjacent to the activity field and contains 2.2 acres of property.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Prepare a redevelopment plan (Chapter 99 RSMo) for the neighborhood, school, and park.
- C Acquire additional properties around Lafayette Park and the school's activity field for additional school-park land and to upgrade the facilities to a neighborhood park and make the school-park inviting and accessible to the neighborhood. The acquisition area should include the remaining property within the city blocks bounded by Campbell, Atlantic, Boonville, and Chase Streets.
- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park. Consider expanding the existing school site to the north within the city block defined by Lyon, Dale, Campbell, and Atlantic streets.
- C Design the school-park as the focal point and gathering place for the neighborhood.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Provide streetscape and other design treatments to unify the school and park properties as one site.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school-park and neighborhood to the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge and Commercial Street.
- C Provide 10 parking spaces for park users.
- C Provide a walkway/path system with connections to the neighborhood.
- C Provide a public restroom and two (2) water fountains.
- C Provide five (5) benches.
- C Provide two (2) picnic tables.
- C Provide a basketball/hard surface court.

Robberson School-Park

The school is located on 2.6 acres of land at 1100 E. Kearney St.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Acquire additional properties south of the school, to upgrade the facilities to a neighborhood park and make the school-park inviting and accessible to the neighborhood. The acquisition area should include the remaining property within the city block bounded by Kearney, Taylor, Howard, and Dale Streets.
- C Design the school-park as the focal point and gathering place for the neighborhood.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school-park to the neighborhood north of Kearney St.

Shady Dell School-Park

The school is located on 2.5 acres of property at 2757 E. Division St..

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Acquire additional properties north and east of the school, to upgrade the facilities to a neighborhood park and make the school-park inviting and accessible to the neighborhood. The acquisition area should include several acres north of the school and east of Old Orchard St. as well a portion of the mobile home park east of the school.
- C Design the school-park as the focal point and gathering place for the neighborhood.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school-park to the neighborhood.

Truman School-Park

The school is located on 35.0 acres of property at 3850 N. Vernon Avenue. There are approximately 30 acres of land available for park use.

- C Recognize its function as a school-park.
- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Design the school-park as the focal point and gathering place for a developing neighborhood.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Encourage neighborhood students to walk to the school by providing safe and convenient pedestrian access to the school-park.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school-park and neighborhood to the South Dry Sac River Greenway.

Wanda Gray School-Park

The school is located on 23 acres of property at 2102 W. Plainview Rd. There are approximately 8 acres of land available for park use.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Design the school-park as the focal point and gathering place for a developing neighborhood.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Encourage neighborhood students to walk to school by providing safe and convenient pedestrian access to the school-park.
- C Redesign the layout of the parking, circulation, and playgrounds to fully utilize the property as a school park.
- C Provide a clearly defined linkage from the school-park and neighborhood to the Ward Branch Greenway.

Weaver/Grant Beach School-Park

The school is located at 1461 N. Douglas Avenue, one block north of Grant Beach Park. There are 2.0 acres of school property. Grant Beach Park contains 12.5 acres of property.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Provide streetscape and other design treatments to unify the school and park properties as one site.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Consider the acquisition of the properties adjacent to the school-park, as they become available, to improve the linkage between the school and park and allow more area for neighborhood park facilities.

Westport School-Park

The school is located adjacent to Westport Park at 415 S. Golden Av. There are 7.0 acres of school property and 13.0 acres of park property.

- C Prepare a site plan and operating agreement between the City and Public School System to consolidate facilities/activities and create a school-park.
- C Design the school-park as the focal point and gathering place for the neighborhood.
- C Provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Encourage neighborhood students to walk to school by providing safe and convenient pedestrian access to the school-park.
- C Redesign the layout of the site fully utilize the property as a school-park.
- C Refer to the recommendations for Westport Park in the *Community Parks* section.

Locations for Future School-Parks

There are several areas in the community lacking neighborhood parks. School-parks can and should fulfill most of the need for future Neighborhood Parks.

School-park sites should be proposed in areas on the fringe of the existing urbanized area as these areas develop. An evaluation of these areas for future schools and neighborhood parks should occur in advance of proposed development. Then, as development occurs adequate schools and park land can be set aside in appropriate locations to serve future neighborhoods.

Community Parks

Definition

Community parks will be the most diversified in character from one park to another as they evolve to serve the needs of the community and take advantage of available land resources. There will be two types of Community Parks; *Urban* and *Metropolitan*.

Urban Community Parks are located within the built-up or urbanized area of Springfield. They include the existing Community Parks (Phelps Grove, Doling, etc.), but may include new community parks developed in the urbanized area in the future. *Urban Community Parks* are generally 20-50 acres in size and are activity dominated. Their focus is on meeting the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. They allow for group activities and offer other recreational opportunities not feasible, or desirable at the neighborhood level. Urban Community Parks should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities.

Metropolitan Community Parks are the most prominent feature of the future park system. These community parks are generally located along the proposed greenway system on the fringe of the urbanized area of Springfield while preserving significant natural features and open space and providing a respite from urban living. In the distant future, they will be incorporated into the urbanized area of Springfield directly serving the urban population. Metropolitan Community Parks should be a minimum of 50 acres and preferably around 200 acres, if possible. It would be desirable to acquire more land than intended for the park, with the intent of developing a plan for the additional land, and selling it at the appropriate time with restrictions for development in accordance with the plan. The proceeds could be used to develop the park.

The need for community parks has been established through a variety of methods including, planning guidelines, community surveys, Vision 20/20 focus groups, and community meetings.

Role

Urban Community Parks should continue to serve the urbanized areas of Springfield. However, as pools and community centers become obsolete, they may be discontinued with resources directed to more centralized facilities in Family Recreation Centers.

The role of Metropolitan Community Parks should be to provide large parcels of land for a variety of recreational opportunities and protect natural or sensitive resource. They should be connected to the rest of the community through the greenway system and provide large gathering places.

Character

The Community Park should be a place where a wide variety of recreational activity can be enjoyed. Active and passive recreation would be available with an appropriate design and size so each can be enjoyed without interfering with the other. The parks should exhibit natural features and nature interpretation as well as an abundance of trails for

walking, biking, or equestrian use as appropriate. There will be an abundance of trees and open grassy areas. The parks will have facilities for community gathering and outdoor music. They will also be connected to the community by being located on or connected by trails to a greenway.

Future Community Parks will have a minimum of activities including:

- C Playgrounds
- C Picnicking
- C Pavilions
- C B-B-Q pits
- C Informal ball fields (not programmed for league play)
- C Cultural activities including outdoor music and gathering spaces
- C Walkways and interpretive trails
- C Bicycle and jogging trails
- C Tennis/Basketball courts
- C Restrooms
- C Drinking fountains
- C Open space for wildlife
- C Exercise stations
- C Parking
- C Lighting

With these minimum facilities provided, each park should be distinct according to the natural features and desires of the community.

Location Criteria

The natural character should play a very significant role in site selection, with emphasis on sites that preserve unique landscapes within the community and/or provide recreational opportunities not otherwise available. The site should exhibit physical characteristics appropriate for both active and passive recreation use. Community Parks should have suitable soils, positive drainage, varying topography, and a variety of vegetation. There should also be sufficient land out of the flood plain for active park components. Depending on their individual character and use, lakes, ponds, and rivers may be associated with community parks. Community Parks should be located along the greenway system. If not located on a greenway, they must be connected by convenient, quality paths and trails. The ease of access from throughout the community and the relationship to other parks and open spaces are also key concerns in site selection. Community parks should be located throughout the urbanized area and on the fringes of the community. Generally, these parks should have street frontage on at least three sides, preferably on four and should not be developed on properties where they are enclosed, subservient or “behind” other development, thereby limiting public visibility and access. In addition, they should not be left-over parcels of land or poorly drained with unsuitable soils and topography. There should be enough developable land for active portions of the community park. Figure 21, below indicates the Community Parks in the proposed park system.

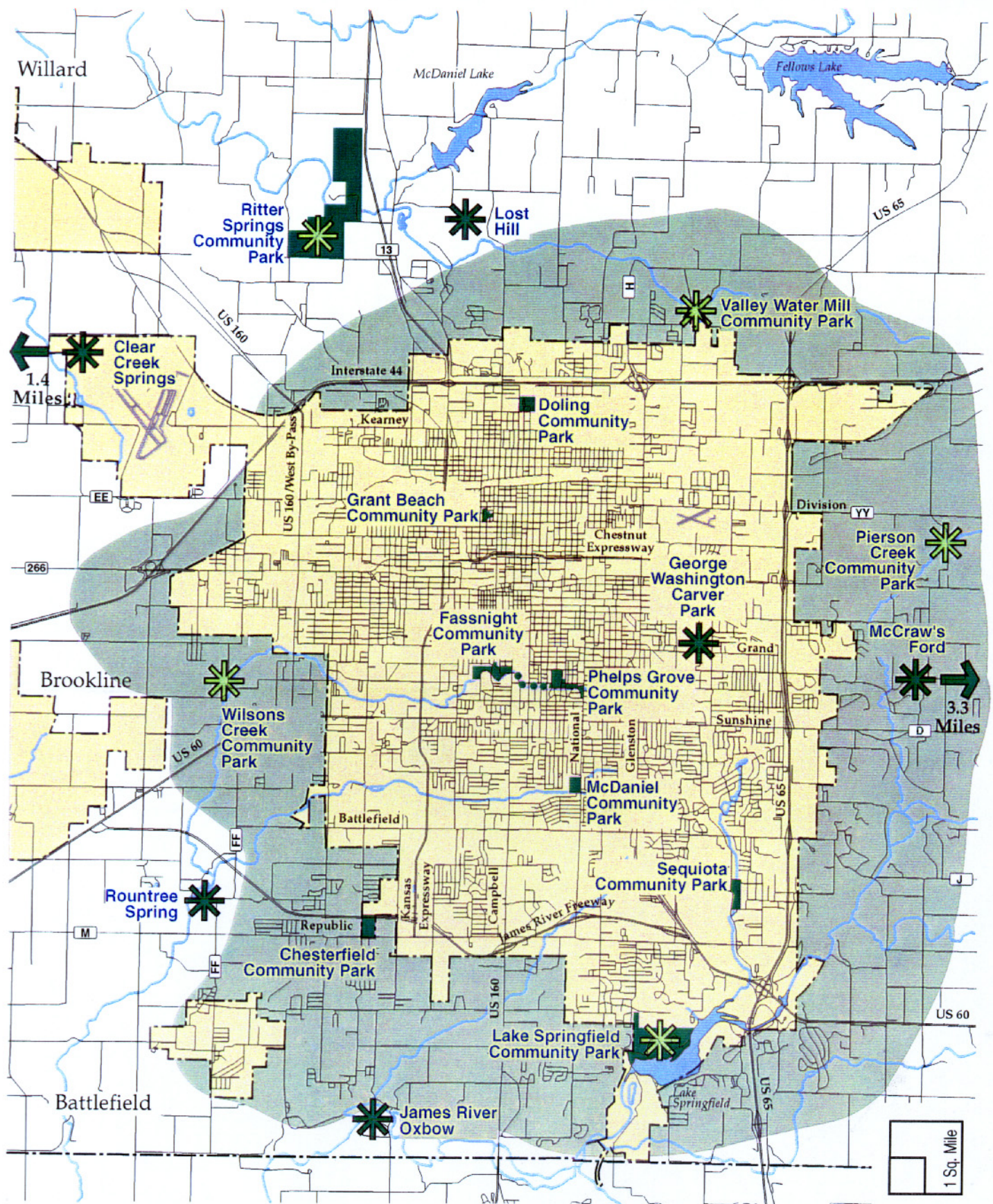


Figure 21
Community Parks and Natural Resource Area Parks

- Community Parks - Urban
- Community Parks - Metropolitan
- Natural Resource Area Parks
- City Boundary
- Future Growth Area



**Springfield-Greene County
Comprehensive Plan**

Community Park Recommendations

- C Develop five (5) Metropolitan Community Parks and designate six (6) Urban Community Parks as described below and shown on Figure 21
- C Acquire parcels of land in accordance with location criteria as soon as possible. Development may follow much later, as necessary, but timely land acquisition must be carried out far in advance of development.
- C Acquire property specifically for Wilson's Creek and Pierson Creek Metropolitan Community Parks. Both sites are under development pressure and are critical to the future park system.
- C Acquire a sufficient amount of land to provide for a community park as well as additional property for development which could be sold at a later date.
- C Locate community parks along the greenway system.
- C Connect all community parks with each other and other parts of the community using greenways, trails, and pathways.
- C Discourage the development of park facilities "behind" or subservient to other development, thereby limiting public visibility and access.
- C Prepare a site plan for each community park (existing and proposed) and use that plan to improve access, circulation, maintenance, and to develop priorities and schedules for improvements to deficient parks.
- C Consider urban community parks as sites for locating Family Recreation Centers. As existing Community Centers become obsolete consider replacing them with Family Recreation Center facilities or relocating them to Community Parks.

Below are the recommendations for individual community parks based on the 1997, *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation*.

Urban Community Parks

Chesterfield Community Park

- C Develop the park as community park with a Family Recreation Center.
- C Develop the park and surrounding commercial property to function together as a unified site serving the community. Discourage the development of park facilities "behind" or subservient to the commercial facilities proposed on the remainder of the property.
- C Develop a sports complex similar to the Cooper/Killian Complex, separate but adjacent to the community park facilities. If sports complex facilities are located at this site, community park facilities must be provided at an alternate location.
- C Provide convenient vehicular access to the park with a main entrance from Republic Road and a secondary entrance from Scenic Avenue.
- C Develop pedestrian and bicycle linkages to existing and proposed neighborhoods in the area.
- C Develop a linkage to the South Creek, Wilsons Creek, and James River Greenways, utilizing the proposed bike routes along James River Freeway and Golden and Cox Avenues.

Doling Community Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C Develop a new Family Recreation Center in conjunction with the existing pool to replace the obsolete and deteriorating Northview Senior Citizen Center and Doling Community Center. After replacing and removing both community centers, restore the grounds to complement the existing passive park setting.
- C Integrate the existing pool with a new community center and consider the addition of a zero-depth feature to the pool.
- C Prepare a site plan that places the Family Recreation Center in an appropriate and functional location without detracting from the ambiance and layout of the park (unlike the existing community centers).
- C Distinguish the entrance to the park by providing a boulevard from Kearney and Grant Streets to the park property. (along Robberson and Talmage)
- C Refurbish the park with special attention given to the retaining walls, fencing, and pathways.
- C Investigate the possibility of acquiring the existing quarry property east of the existing park and incorporating it into the park site plan.
- C Link the park to Pea Ridge Creek Greenway along Grant Avenue and Norton Road.

Fassnight Community Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C As an element of the site plan, re-design the parking and circulation to create a safer, more organized environment for the existing and future activities.
- C Connect Phelps Grove and Fassnight Parks along the Fassnight Creek Greenway corridor by acquiring properties as they become available. A greenway trail with linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods, landscaping and stormwater management should be provided in the greenway corridor.
- C Incorporate the Fassnight Creek Greenway into the park layout.
- C Provide signage within the park that is more sympathetic with the historic nature of the park.
- C Refurbish the park with special attention given to the retaining walls, fencing, and pathways.

Grant Beach Community Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C The park should be expanded both to better link with nearby Fairbanks school to the south and Weaver school to the north. Acquisition of the housing north and east of the park will open up the park and provide an inviting and well defined entrance from the neighborhood.
- C Provide a pathway system within the park.
- C Relocate the historic train to a visitor center or visitor facilities exposed to tourism such as Civic Park or adjacent to the Missouri Pacific depot building in Jordan Creek Valley.

McDaniel Community Park (acquired in 1997)

- C Prepare a site plan for the layout and future development of the park and its facilities according to proposed Community Park Guidelines.
- C Acquire additional property west of the existing park to clearly establish the acreage necessary for a community park.
- C Provide convenient vehicular access to the park from National Avenue as well as pedestrian access from the surrounding neighborhoods.
- C Incorporate the South Creek Greenway through the park and provide a trailhead and informational kiosk for the greenway trail.
- C Clearly link the park with Meador Park to the east.

Phelps Grove Community Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C Connect Phelps Grove and Fassnight Parks along the Fassnight Creek Greenway corridor by acquiring properties as they become available. A greenway trail with linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods, landscaping and stormwater management should be provided in the greenway corridor.
- C Incorporate the Fassnight Creek Greenway into the park layout.
- C Provide a paved pathway system within the park, including the property along National Avenue.
- C Clearly link the areas west of Clay and east of Virginia Streets with the main park into one unified park.
- C Improve and better define the parking facilities adjacent to the park to preserve the character of the neighborhood and accommodate park visitors.

Sequoiota Community Park

- C Develop a plan within the context of Springfield's historic parks to enhance and preserve the heritage of the park. The design should include the preservation and maintenance of the existing limestone structures and retaining walls. The landscaping, lighting, signage, walkways, equipment and fixtures located in the park should be updated using historically appropriate materials. The design, construction, and location of any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C Refurbish the park with special attention given to the retaining walls and pathways.
- C Provide a paved pathway system within the park.
- C Develop a system to balance the enjoyment of the various informal dirt paths throughout the park while ensuring the stabilization and erosion control of the steep banks and rock outcroppings on the east side of the park.
- C Incorporate the Galloway Creek Greenway throughout the park.
- C As park and greenway demand increases, re-design the parking and vehicular circulation to the park to create a safer, more organized environment for the existing and future activities. Consider expanding the park to the north to provide more open space and accommodate additional parking.

Metropolitan Community Parks

Lake Springfield Community Park

The James River widens into Lake Springfield in the southeast portion of the city near the intersection of US-65 and 60. The lake and surrounding property is owned by City Utilities and contains 1132 acres. There are 154 acres of property northwest of the lake and another 53 acres southeast of the lake that already provide picnicking and passive recreation opportunities. The lake is also a popular fishing spot, and though boats are allowed (limited to six horsepower), no swimming is permitted. The Springfield Conservation Nature Center abuts the northeast portion of the lake. The Missouri Department of Conservation also provides three access points to the lake, including handicap accessible fishing facilities. Since Lake Springfield is already a popular park, along a proposed greenway, and has adequate vehicular access, it is natural to develop it into a Metropolitan Community Park.

- C Develop a management agreement between the Park Board and City Utilities for the maintenance and manage of City Utilities property that is incorporated into the parks, open space, and greenway system.
- C Prepare a site plan for the layout and future development of the park and its facilities according to proposed Metropolitan Community Park Guidelines.
- C Physically link the park with the Springfield Conservation Nature Center.
- C Incorporate the James River Greenway through the park.
- C Improve and clearly designate the entrance to the park from Kissick Av.
- C Provide a paved pathway system within the park.

Pierson Creek Community Park

The intersection of Pierson Creek and the proposed Pierson Creek Parkway provide the setting for a proposed eastside Metropolitan Community Park. The location has good vehicular access just south of Highway Y (Division Street extended), is located on Pierson Creek providing a beautiful natural resource, and is strategically located to serve the community. The actual site should be selected depending on the proposed alignment of the Parkway. This should be done as soon as possible so the land can be acquired before it is developed. The development pattern is currently large tracts (more than 10 acres) with expensive homes. There is open and wooded undeveloped land in the vicinity of the proposed park.

- C Define the alignment of the future eastside parkway.
- C Identify and begin acquiring land in the vicinity of Pierson Creek and the future parkway to set aside property for the future development of a community park.
- C Incorporate the Pierson Creek Greenway through the park.
- C Prepare a site plan for the layout and future development of the park and its facilities according to proposed Metropolitan Community Park Guidelines.

Ritter Springs Community Park

Ritter Springs is an existing park northwest of Springfield. Approximately 600 acres of rolling topography exists along the north and south sides of the Little Sac River and includes forest areas, open space, trails, playgrounds, and an archery range. Ritter Springs Park also includes two historic cemeteries, and old barn and silo, a mill pond and several springs and caves. Adjacent to the park is a mountain bike trail. The Sac River Trail, located on the site of a former landfill, was developed as a response to overuse and erosion concerns caused by mountain bikes at Ritter Springs park.

- C Develop a site plan according to proposed Metropolitan Community Park Guidelines, with emphasis on improving the playground, buildings, and picnicking, while adding other Community Park facilities.
- C Incorporate the Little Sac River and Spring Branch Greenways through the park.
- C Include the areas both north and south of the Little Sac River in the community park and ensure adequate linkage to the Sac River Trail (mountain bike trail) on the northern portion of the property.
- C Consider the possibility of providing limited tent camping facilities in the park.

Valley Water Mill Community Park

Valley Water Mill is an 86 acre tract of land owned by City Utilities which contains a 12 acre lake. The lake feeds the South Dry Sac River which is directly connected to the Fulbright Spring through an underground cave opening or "swallow hole." Because of this direct link to a portion of Springfield's water supply system, this site plays an important role in water quality protection. Currently only bank fishing is allowed at the lake. Valley Water Mill is strategically located northwest of Springfield, just northwest of the Stewart Golf Course. The development pattern is

composed of large residential tracts (more than 10 acres) and small farm tracts. The land around the proposed park is wooded, gently sloping and has good vehicular access.

- C Develop a management agreement between the Park Board and City Utilities for the maintenance and manage of City Utilities property that is incorporated into the parks, open space, and greenway system.
- C Define the alignment of the future northside parkway.
- C Identify and begin acquiring land in the vicinity of Valley Water Mill, the South Dry Sac River and the future parkway to set aside property for the future development of a community park.
- C Develop a Water Resource facility on the site. Laboratory facilities could provide research opportunities for water resource protection, watershed preservation and the impacts of development on the water quality. Educational facilities would allow the public to understand the effects development has upon our water resources and the latest measures to use to protect and mitigate impacts on water quality.
- C Incorporate the South Dry Sac Greenway through the park.
- C Prepare a site plan for the layout and future development of the park and its facilities according to proposed Metropolitan Community Park Guidelines.

Wilsons Creek Community Park

The intersection of Wilsons Creek and W. Bennett street provide the setting for a proposed westside Metropolitan Community Park. The location has good vehicular access just north and west of U.S. Highway 60 (Sunshine Street extended), is located on Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway, and is strategically located to serve the community. The actual site should be selected as soon as possible so the land can be acquired before it is developed. The development pattern is currently small residential subdivisions with moderate priced homes and a few small farm tracts in the area. There is open and wooded undeveloped land in the vicinity of the proposed park.

- C Identify and immediately begin acquiring land in the vicinity of Wilsons Creek and the future greenway to set aside property for the future development of a community park.
- C Define the alignment of the future westside parkway and provide a direct and convenient linkage between the park and parkway.
- C Incorporate the Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway through the park.
- C Prepare a site plan for the layout and future development of the park and its facilities according to proposed Metropolitan Community Park Guidelines.

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Special Use Parks and Facilities

Definition

Special Use Parks and Facilities cover a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use. These facilities and resources are one of the strongest elements of the Springfield park system, because of the unique opportunities that address specific needs. They involve a variety of activities and facilities, including: Historic and Cultural Sites; Recreation Facilities; Family Recreation Centers; Community Centers; Senior Centers; Golf Courses; Ornamental Gardens; and Lakes.

Role

The role of the Special Use Parks and Facilities are to provide a place for single-use activities of interest to the entire community. The need for additional Special Use Parks or Facilities has been established through:

- ℄ Planning guidelines
- ℄ Community surveys
- ℄ Focus groups

Character

Special Use Parks and Facilities should be high quality places that have special features of interest to a broad cross section of the community. Each facility or resource will serve a specific purpose and therefore cannot be categorized into on set of guidelines or features. They are gathering places for specific events of activities.

Location Criteria

The location of Special Use Parks and Facilities should reflect the need for the park and the reason it is being established. Again, each facility or resource will serve a specific purpose and therefore cannot be located based on a single set of guidelines. However, all special use facilities or resources should be highly visible, easily accessible, and prominent features of the community. The shared use concept should be considered during the site selection process. Figure 22, below indicates the Special Use Parks and Facilities in the proposed park system.

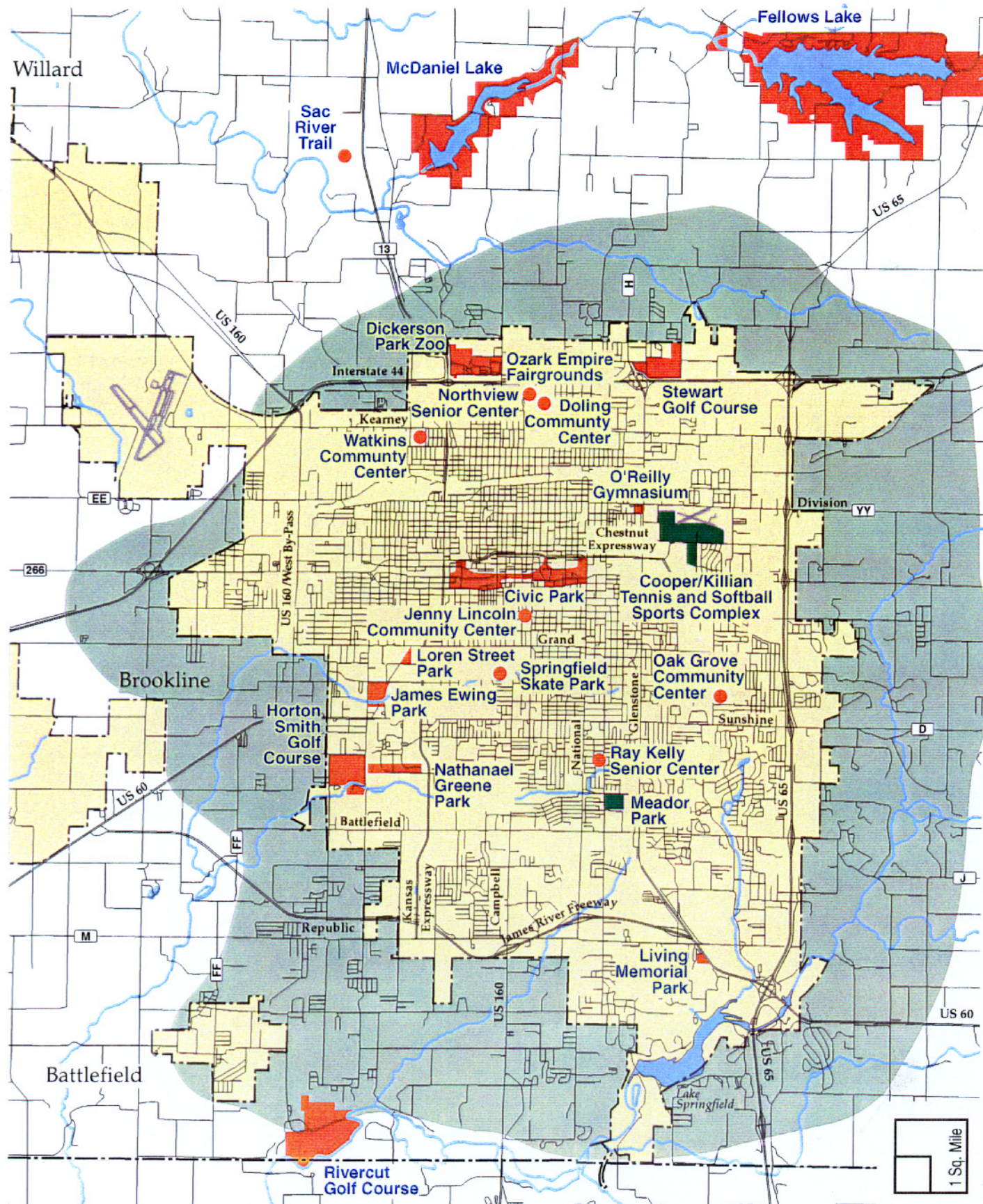


Figure 22
Special Use Parks & Facilities and Sports Complexes

- Sports Complexes
- Special Use Parks and Facilities
- Future Growth Area
- City Boundary

Special Use Parks and Facilities Recommendations

- C Prepare a site plan for each special use facility (existing and proposed) and use that plan to improve access, circulation, maintenance, and to develop priorities and schedules for improvements.
- C Establish special use facilities in conjunction with clearly defined needs that serve a significant portion of the community.
- C Evaluate the potential users of facilities when defining funding strategies and determining project priorities.
- C Locate facilities along or in conjunction with the greenway system, where feasible.
- C Discourage the development of park facilities “behind” or subservient to other development, thereby limiting public visibility and access.

Below are the recommendations for individual special use parks and facilities based on the 1997, *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation*.

Dickerson Park Zoo

- C Continue implementing the existing Zoo Master Plan.
- C Prepare an overall concept plan to visually unify the Zoo and Fairgrounds into one site. Coordinate with the fairgrounds administration to share facilities, when feasible.
- C Provide a gateway to the Zoo at the Norton Road-Route 13 intersection.
- C Provide a parkway setting along Norton Road leading up to the Zoo and Fairgrounds entrances.
- C Continue seeking permanent funding for Zoo activities.
- C Provide a linkage along Norton Road from the Zoo to greenway system.

Doling Community and Northview Senior Centers

- C Develop a Family Recreation Center in conjunction with the existing pool to replace the obsolete and deteriorating Northview Senior Citizen Center and Doling Community Center. After replacing and removing both community centers, restore the grounds to complement the existing passive park setting. The design, construction, and location of the family recreation center or any new buildings or facilities should conform to the historic character of the park.
- C Integrate the existing pool with a family recreation center and consider the addition of a zero-depth feature to the pool.

Fellows Lake

- C Establish an operating agreement with City Utilities to allow the Park Department to assume the management of the park while maintaining the water quality standards of our drinking water reservoir.
- C Incorporate Fellows Lake into the Little Sac River Greenway and develop a trail system for the property.
- C Investigate the feasibility of establishing a lodge, conference center, meeting space, and/or camping facilities on Fellows Lake to complement our existing conference resources and capitalize on the economic development potential of our park system.

Founders Park

- C Continue supporting and participating in the planning efforts for the development of the park.
- C Integrate the site into Civic Park and the Jordan Creek Greenway.

Horton Smith Golf Course

- C Incorporate the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway through the golf course. Minimize the conflict between trail users and golfers.

James Ewing Park

- C Given the problems associated with the former landfill, remove the softball fields and appurtenances and develop a new sports complex elsewhere.
- C Prepare a thorough site assessment to determine what facilities could be located at this site.
- C Develop a trailhead for the Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway.
- C Locate other specialty uses at this park.

Jenny Lincoln Community Center

- C Continue leasing the facility to various not profit agencies. At such time as the building requires major investment or significant upgrades, remove relocate the facility from the park.

Living Memorial Park

- C Provide neighborhood park facilities for the surrounding neighborhoods while preserving the original intent and design as a memorial to our veterans.

Loren Street Park

- C Integrate the park into Jordan Creek Greenway.

McDaniel Lake

- C Establish an operating agreement with City Utilities to allow the Park Department to assume the management of the park while maintaining the water quality standards of our drinking water reservoir.
- C Incorporate McDaniel Lake into the Little Sac River Greenway and develop a trail system for the property.

Meador Park

- C Make the ballfield portion of the park available for retail development or expansion from the mall property. Regardless of retail development or mall expansion, maintain the pool and recreation facilities for the neighborhood.
- C Replace the ballfields at a new sports complex.

Nathanael Greene

- C Improve the entrance to the park by acquiring the property just west of the existing park along Scenic Avenue.
- C Create an entrance and parking lot to the park from Kansas Expressway on the east side for better access to the Japanese Garden and Gray/Campbell Farmstead.
- C Strengthen the linkage from the park to the South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway by acquiring the Helmich property.
- C Work with SMSU Agriculture Station to lessen the impact of the equine center on the aesthetics of the Japanese Garden.

Oak Grove Community Center

- C Maintain the facility as a community center until it becomes obsolete or is replaced by a family recreation center elsewhere in the community.

O'Reilly Gymnasium

- C Maintain the facility until it becomes obsolete or is replaced by a family recreation center elsewhere in the community.

Ozark Empire Fairgrounds

- C Continue the operating agreement with the Fair Board.
- C Prepare an overall concept plan to visually unify the Fairgrounds and Zoo into one site. Coordinate with the zoo administration to share facilities, when feasible
- C Provide a gateway to the Zoo and Fairgrounds at the Norton Road-Route 13 intersection.
- C Provide a parkway setting along Norton Road leading up to the Zoo and Fairgrounds entrances.
- C Provide a linkage along Norton Road from the Fairgrounds to the greenway system.

Ray Kelly Senior Center

- C Maintain the facility as a senior center.

Rivercut Golf Course

- C Incorporate the James River Greenway adjacent to the golf course.

Sac River Trail

- C Improve signage and visibility to the trail from Route 13.

Springfield Skatepark

- C Complete the facility as designed.
- C Maintain close involvement with the skatepark association for the operation and maintenance of the facility.

Stewart Golf Course

- C Remove Stewart Street that runs between the Oscar Bloom and Stewart Courses to unify the property into one site.

Family Recreation Centers

Definition

A Family Recreation Center is a community resource facility that provides a variety of services and recreational opportunities for all ages. This type of facility has evolved from the community centers of the past and concentrates multi-purpose facilities into one large setting. A concentration of facilities into a Family Recreation Center provides a better, more efficient facility for the delivery of services to the community. Components of a Family Recreation Center include:

- C Administrative Offices
- C Multi-Purpose Rooms and Meeting Space
- C Gymnasium
- C Exercise Facilities
- C Playground Area
- C Outdoor Multi-Purpose Courts
- C Other optional components of a Family Recreation Center include, Aquatics Center, Child Care, Concessions, Recreational Ice Rink or other community facilities such as a Library, Senior Center, etc.

A Family Recreation Center should be located on a five- to 10-acre site, with a 30,000 - 60,000 square foot indoor facility.

Role

A Family Recreation Center should serve as a large centralized facility for indoor activities and events. In most cases programmed activities or league play will occur at these facilities.

Character

A Family Recreation Center provides a lively, festive atmosphere for community activities in a prominent civic building. The facility should reflect the highest quality architecture and landscaping in a prominent setting to display a sense of importance in public spaces and facilities.

Location Criteria

Family Recreation Centers should be located throughout the community. These facilities don't necessarily need to be located in a park. It's more important for them to be located in a compatible setting with public visibility and convenient access. These facilities should serve 50,000 - 75,000 people.

Family Recreation Center Recommendations

- C Locate Family Recreation Center at Doling Park and Chesterfield Park. In addition, provide a Family Recreation Center in central Springfield at one of the following locations: Civic Park, Phelps Grove/Fassnight Parks, or McDaniel Park.

- C Incorporate the Family Recreation Center design and layout into the site plans for each mentioned above.
- C Strategically locate Family Recreation Centers throughout the community, in compatible settings, and along major thoroughfares for high visibility and ease of access.
- C Locate Family Recreation Centers along or in conjunction with the greenway system, where feasible.
- C Discourage the development of facilities “behind” or subservient to other development, thereby limiting public visibility and access.

Sports Complexes

Definition

The sports complex classification consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities at larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.

Role

Sports complexes allow for:

- C Economies of scale and higher quality facilities
- C Improving management/scheduling
- C Improved control of facility use
- C Greater control of negative impacts to neighborhood and community parks

Sports complexes should be developed to accommodate the specific needs of user groups and athletic associations based on demand and program offerings. Specific facilities and complexes should be designed to respond to regional and national events or market opportunities in conjunction with economic development policies and activities.

Character

Sports complexes will be dominated by sports facilities. They should exhibit a formal layout to accommodate the facilities which must conform to standard size and dimensions. In addition, sports complexes should clearly define each activity, provide adequate landscaping, and use trails to link the entire complex. Pavilions or plazas should be provided to accommodate gatherings and ceremonies associated with sporting events.

Location Criteria

Sports complexes should be viewed as strategically located community-wide facilities rather than serving well-defined neighborhood or community areas. Locating them adjacent to non-residential land uses is preferred, yet buffering should be used where facilities are located adjacent to residential areas. Sports Complexes should be accessible from major thoroughfares and direct access through residential areas should be avoided. Given that athletic facilities will likely be used for league play and tournaments, access routes from outside the community should also be considered. If possible, sports complexes should be located along the greenway connected with the community. Figure 23, below indicates the Sports Complexes in the proposed park system.

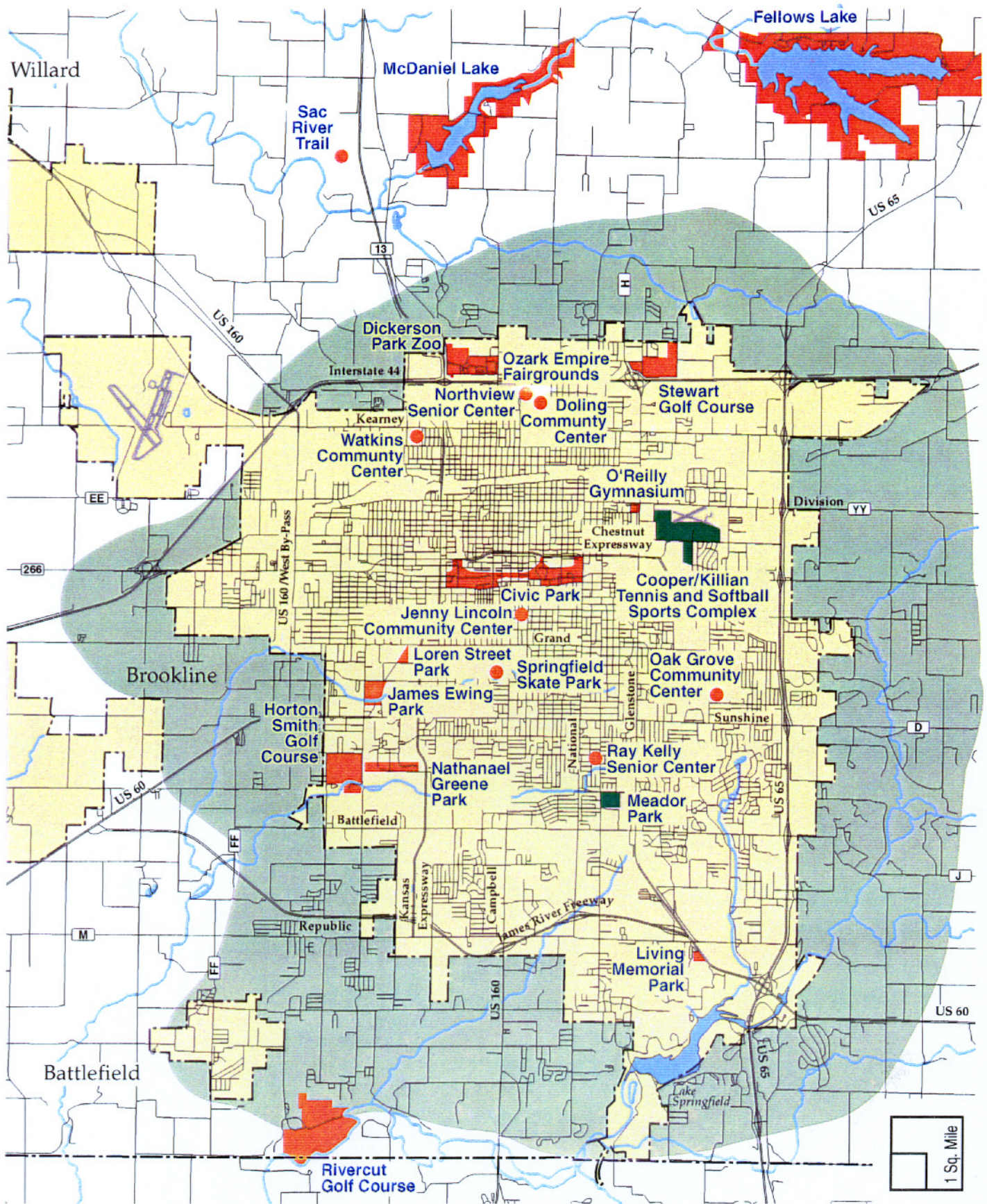


Figure 23
Sports Complexes and Special Use Parks & Facilities

- Sports Complexes
- Special Use Parks and Facilities
- Future Growth Area
- City Boundary

Sports Complex Recommendations

- C Prepare a site plan for each sports complex (existing and proposed) and use that plan to improve access, circulation, maintenance, and to develop priorities and schedules for improvements.
- C Place sports complexes strategically throughout the community and along major thoroughfares for high visibility and ease of access.
- C Develop standards and guidelines for the design, layout, orientation, development, and construction of sports complexes.
- C Satisfy the demand for sports facilities throughout the community and allow for flexibility in management to meet activity trends and demographic conditions.
- C Locate sports complexes along or in conjunction with the greenway system, where feasible.
- C Discourage the development of park facilities “behind” or subservient to other development, thereby limiting public visibility and access.
- C Develop strategies to provide youth programs at low or no cost and still allow the recovery of costs from adult programs and tournaments.

Below are the recommendations for individual sports complexes based on the 1997, *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation*.

Cooper/Killian Complex

- C Continue developing and maintaining the three sites (Cooper Park, Killian Softball Complex, and Lakes Country Soccer) as a first rate facility .
- C Provide a boulevard entrance and gateway signage along Pythian as you approach the complex from Chestnut Expressway.
- C Through consistent signage, landscaping, fixtures, architecture, and pathways, create a physical and visual linkage between all three facilities.
- C Acquire the downtown airport property, once it becomes obsolete and is no longer in service. Expand the recreation and sports complex facilities.

James Ewing Sports Complex

- C Given the problems associated with the former landfill, remove the softball fields and appurtenances, and locate facilities in another location.
- C Reclassify this property to a Special Use Facility.
- C Prepare a thorough site assessment to determine what facilities could be located at this site.
- C Develop a trailhead for the Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway.
- C Locate other specialty uses at this park.

Meador Sports Complex

- C Reclassify this property to a Special Use Park.
- C Make the ballfield portion of the park available for retail development or expansion from the mall property. Regardless of retail development or mall expansion, maintain the pool and recreation facilities for the neighborhood.
- C Replace the ballfields at a new sports complex.

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Civic Park

Definition

In the spirit of *Community As A Park*, "Civic Park" will integrate and link existing and future amenities in downtown with a focal point or community gathering place in the heart of the community. It is a park for everyone to share and enjoy and should promote a sense of community and provide a unique place and clear identity for the Springfield area. Civic Park is a broadly defined area of downtown which provides the vision and framework for guiding development and redevelopment of public and private facilities. Within Civic Park is a core area of publicly owned land that provides open spaces, gathering places, and opportunities for major civic events and activities. Since the core area will be publicly owned, goals are accomplished through public ownership, management, and public/private investment. Outside the core area, the goals must largely be accomplished through policy making, public infrastructure improvements, and private initiatives.

Role

The role of Civic Park is to provide an identity for Springfield. It should revive the importance of public spaces and facilities and should serve as a destination point for residents and tourists alike. Civic Park is also a major economic development initiative to revitalize not only downtown, but the regional economy as well.

Character

Civic Park should be a place unique to Springfield and Greene County, where a sense of community can be fostered. It should contain significant and unique, one-of-a-kind, civic facilities in a festival atmosphere. Quality should go into every facet of the park, which must be clean, safe, and friendly. Examples of features and activities in Civic Park include:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| C Public plazas and gathering spaces | C Farmer's market |
| C Museums | C Open space |
| C Theaters | C Water features |
| C Outdoor music and festival facilities,
performing arts parks, and other
entertainment venues | C Historic structures |
| C Botanic and ornamental gardens | C Performing art parks |
| C Ornamental gardens | C Recreation Facilities |
| | C Civic Structures |
| | C Exposition/Civic Center |
| | C Art, Sculpture, and Statuary |

The downtown area already has some of the features and activities noted above, including the Discovery Center, the Landers and Gillioz Theaters, and the existing shops, dining, and entertainment opportunities in downtown. It is important that these elements are integrated with each other and the core area of publicly owned land. In addition, other important community facilities, such as the Art Museum and Dickerson Park Zoo should be connected with Civic Park through visual, physical, and promotional linkages.

Location Criteria

Civic Park is a broadly defined concept in downtown which generally links the Greater Downtown Area, Government Plaza, Drury College, Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC), and the northern portion of the Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU) campus.

The core area of publicly owned land in Civic Park is well defined in the Jordan Creek Valley. The core area consists of approximately 250 acres of land. However, more land may be acquired as needed to accommodate open spaces, gathering places, and other civic structures and facilities. Figure 24, below indicates the location of Civic Park.

Civic Park Recommendations

- C Prepare a Civic Park master plan and develop the project in manageable phases.
- C Prepare a long-range financing plan for the acquisition of property and development of Civic Park.
- C Adopt policy for public infrastructure improvements and private initiatives supporting implementation of the Civic Park plan.
- C Adopt policy for the acquisition, management, and public/private investment of the core area.
- C Define Civic Park by providing signage, landscaping, and streetscapes that signify a destination or arrival at unique place.
- C Acquire land in the Jordan Creek Valley to create a core area for Civic Park.
- C Locate unique, one-of-a-kind, civic facilities in Civic Park.
- C Link other community facilities (i.e., Art Museum, Dickerson Park Zoo) through visual, physical, and promotional linkages.
- C Prepare design standards for Civic Park that reflect Springfield's unique physical character and cultural and historic heritage.
- C Develop an Exposition/Civic Center in the downtown area as an element of Civic Park.
- C Link Civic Park with the rest of the community through the greenway system.

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7. Open Space System

Definition

Open Space is land not used for development or formal parks that is to remain available for public enjoyment. The enjoyment may be no more than viewing the open space, but it is designated to not be developed. Open Space may consist of land surrounding public facilities (such as sewage treatment plants), significant natural features, agricultural land, cemeteries, functioning ecosystems, forests and woodlands, wildlife habitat, etc. Open Space is either public land (other than parks) or private land. Public open space should be managed by the operating department for maximum public enjoyment possible, considering the purpose of publicly owning the land. Designated private open space should be protected through easements or other methods available. Land trusts are valuable organizations for helping land owners protect private land holdings.

Role

The role of open space to provide expanses of land, or significant features that are to remain open for a specific purpose. The most important reason for designating open space is to ensure that all public land is utilized in the best and most efficient manner, or that significant privately owned open space is protected, if possible.

Types of Open Space

Significant Natural Features. Most of the significant natural features and resources in Greene County are associated with water resources and karst topography, the unique geologic structure of the Ozarks. These features include springs, caves, sink holes, streams, floodplains and wetlands as well as other areas including forests, wildlife habitat, and steep slopes. These features can be incorporated into the park system to provide a diverse outdoor experience while preserving the quality of the natural environment. If these features do not become parks, protection as private land should be sought using conservation easements or land trusts. See Figure 25 for the locations of Significant Natural Features in Greene County.

Stormwater Detention Facilities. Regional stormwater detention facilities are open space and can be used for other purposes.

Community Gardens. Community gardens are gardens on public land available and cared for by the public. They can include vegetable gardens for households or landscape gardens for community beautification. Community gardens can be provided in designated open space.

Cemeteries. Cemeteries, by their nature, are open space. No changes are required, but only that they are acknowledged as open space and to the extent possible, should be available for walking and trail connections.

Public Land. Land surrounding public facilities or held for future use are included in the open space system. Again, the land should be available for multiple uses to the maximum extent possible.

Agriculture. Agricultural land, of course, is privately owned. However, agricultural land can play an important role in the open space network. Efforts should be made to preserve agricultural land to the extent possible.

Natural Resource Area Parks

The Open Space System consists of a variety of sites and properties which vary in type, size, location and use. Establishing Natural Resource Area Parks will protect and interpret significant or sensitive natural resources while utilizing them as open space available for public enjoyment. Natural Resource Area Parks are primarily distinguished from Open Space in that Natural Resource Area Parks will be part of the park system, owned and managed by the Park Board. A subsequent section includes descriptions and locations for proposed Natural Resource Area Parks.

Open Space System Recommendations

- C Ensure that publicly owned open space that is not incorporated into the park or greenway system be appropriately managed as open space.
- C Preserve significant natural features and resources as identified on Figure 25.
- C Preserve features and resources on private lands by actively seeking permanent protection through tools available to a land trust organization. Work with land owners and Ozark Greenways (in their capacity as a land trust) to determine the most appropriate method of protecting the resources. Options include purchase, donation, bargain sale, conservation easement, trade lands, estate planning, life estate, and other available tools. In some cases, the most practical way for the resources to be protected might even be by developing part of the property while protecting the significant features or resources.
- C Preserve the natural landscape and character along stream corridors and around significant natural features.

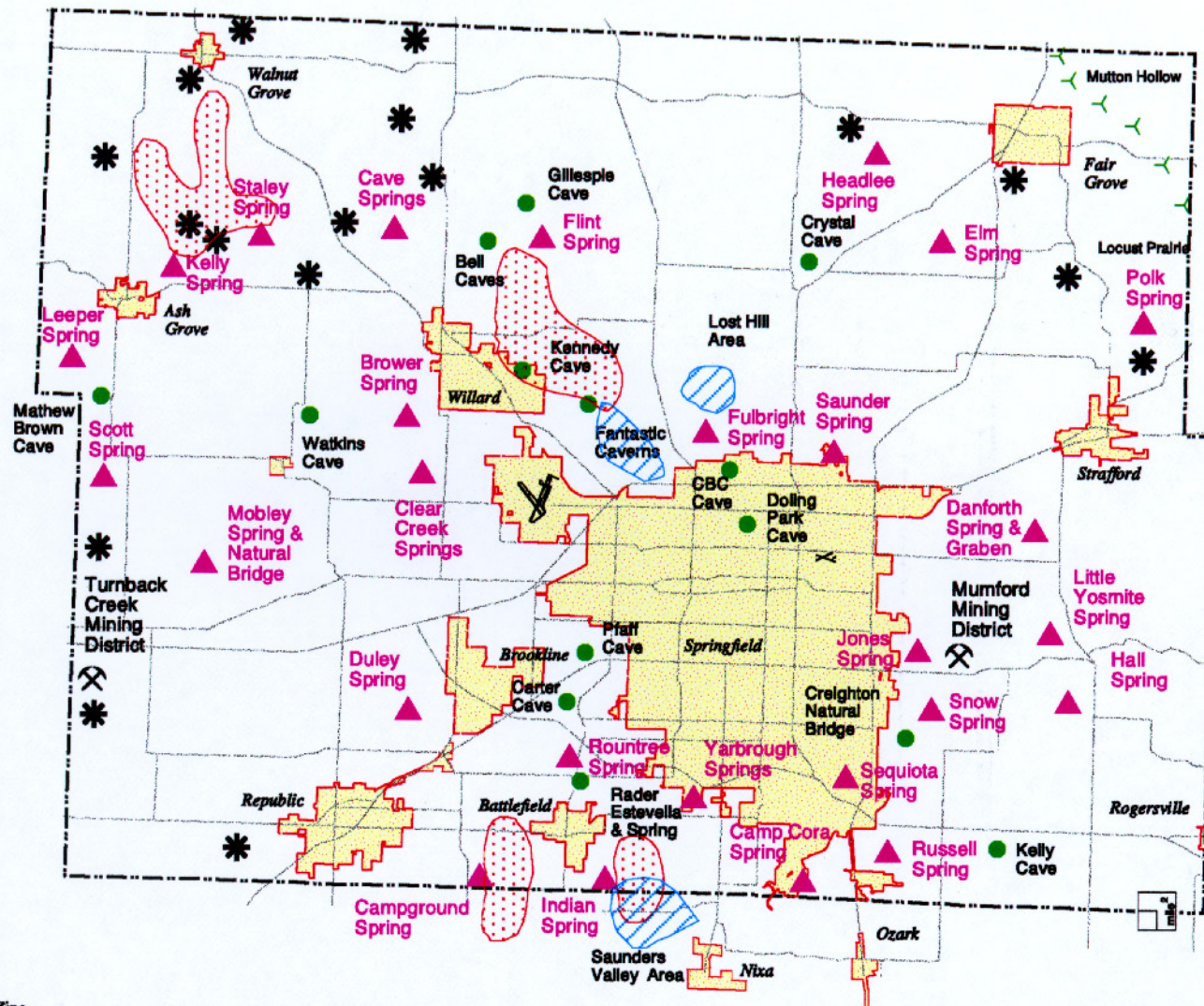







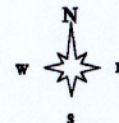


Figure 25

Significant Natural Features in Greene County

-  Lead & Zinc Mining Areas
-  Significant Springs
-  Significant Caves (approx location)
-  Monadnocks (outcrops of Pennsylvanian sandstone)
-  City Limits
-  Missouri Bladderpod Area (Endangered Species)
-  Environmental Regions of note (unique karst features)

Federal designated critical habitat of the Nangua Darter in the Pomme d'Terre River in northeastern Greene County





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Natural Resource Area Parks

Definition

Natural Resource Area Parks are lands set aside for preservation and interpretation of significant natural resources. These lands consist of individual sites exhibiting natural resources; lands that are unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential, including steep slopes, flood plain, caves, sink holes; sensitive water resources; wildlife habitat areas; forest lands; and native or endangered vegetation

Role

The role of the natural resource area parks is to protect and interpret significant or sensitive natural resources while utilizing them as open space available for public enjoyment.

Character

Natural Resource Area Parks should remain as close to their natural state as possible. The land should be managed to preserve the resource in its natural state for future generations to enjoy. The size of Natural Resource Area Parks will vary depending on the type and size of the resource being preserved. In any case enough land should be acquired to adequately protect the resource, buffer adjacent land uses, and allow development of limited park facilities such as trails and interpretive facilities.

Location Criteria

Natural Resource Area Parks should be located along and connected to the greenway system. While there are significant natural features throughout the Greene County, the designation of Natural Resource Area Parks should be geographically distributed to serve the entire community. Figure 26, below, indicates the Natural Resource Area Parks in the proposed park system.

Natural Resource Area Parks Recommendations

- C Provide six (6) Natural Resource Area Parks as shown on Figure 26.
- C Preserve significant natural resources in large tracts of land and incorporate into the park system.
- C Locate future Natural Resource Area Parks along or connected to the greenway system.
- C Limit the facilities provided at Natural Resource Area Parks to those that leave the site in its natural state, such as trails and interpretive facilities.
- C Prepare a site plan for natural resource area parks and use that plan to develop priorities and schedules for improvements. Coordinate with land owners and a land trust to prepare a plan that protects, interprets, and provides for public access and enjoyment of the significant resources.
- C Provide education materials and interpretive programs in natural resource area parks.
- C During the planning process, determine the appropriateness of development in conjunction with the natural features or resources.

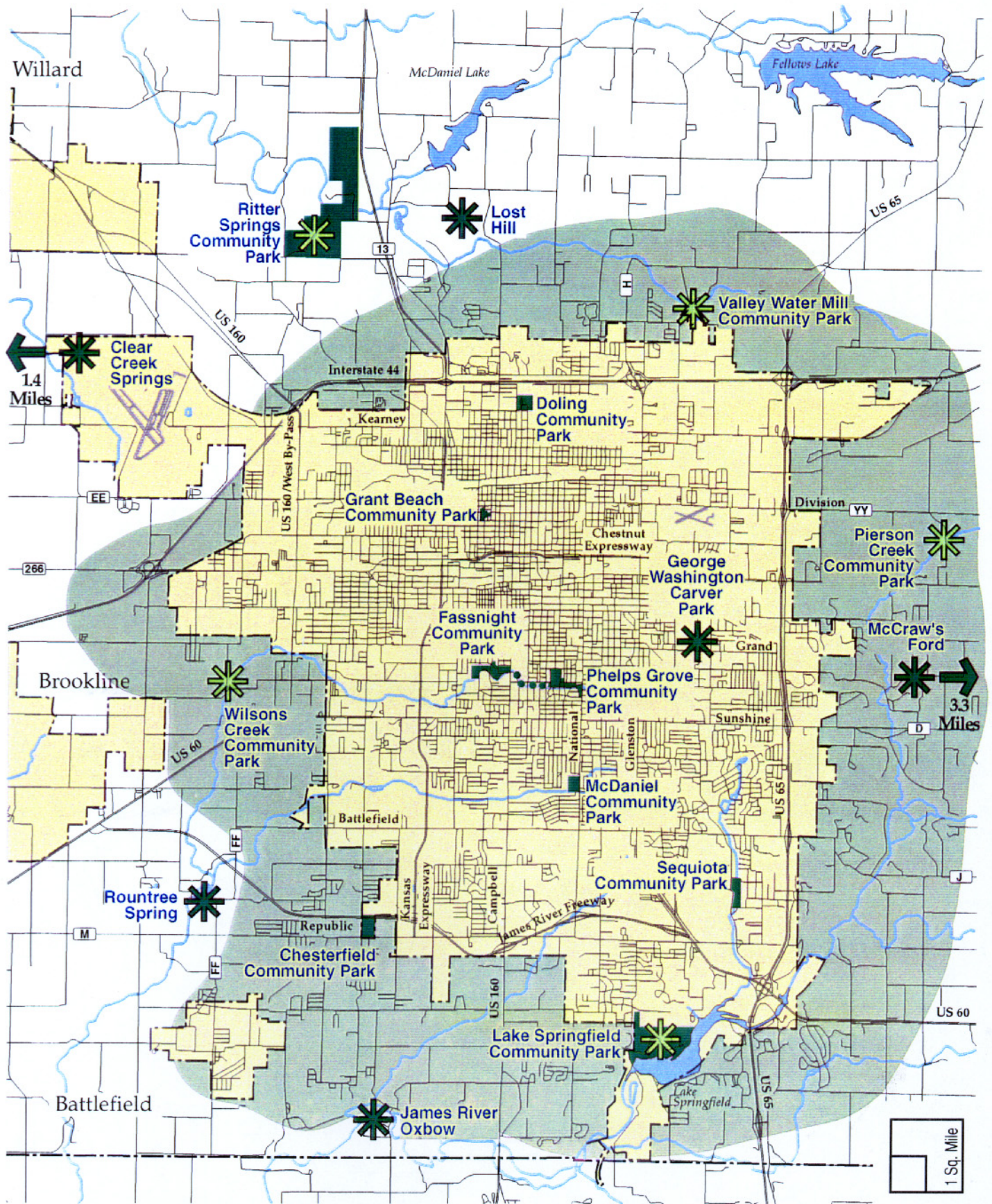


Figure 26
Natural Resource Area Parks and Community Parks



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Below are descriptions and any specific recommendations for the natural resource area parks proposed with this plan.

Clear Creek Springs Natural Resource Area Park

Clear Creek Springs is located on Clear Creek near Farm Roads 97 and 108, just west of the Springfield-Branson Regional Airport. It contains several springs in a rural setting and preserves some cultural heritage of the community. In the 1920s, a private enterprise used the natural springs and constructed recreational swimming pools. This property is privately owned and no longer open to the public. However, the natural springs continue to feed Clear Creek and it remains a significant natural feature.

George Washington Carver Natural Resource Area Park

This property is the site of a large sinkhole near Grand Street and Oak Grove Avenue. The City purchased the property to protect the sinkhole from development. George Washington Carver Natural Resource Area Park remains as a large tract of open space in the built up portion of the community.

- C Create visible access points and parking from Cherry and Grand Streets.
- C Provide interpretation facilities for sinkholes and other natural resources in the park utilizing trails, kiosks, and exhibits.
- C Develop an interpretative feature highlighting the work of George Washington Carver.

James River Oxbow Natural Resource Area Park

This site was formed where a sharp bend in the James River resembles an oxbow. James River Oxbow Natural Resource Area Park is just across the river from Rivercut Golf Course. The site has historic significance as the site of early settlement. More recently, this property was the site of horse racetrack. This property is privately owned and the racetrack, while still present, is overgrown and no longer in use.

Lost Hill Natural Resource Area Park

This feature was formed by the changed course of the South Dry Sac River. Lost Hill Natural Resource Area Park includes a variety of karst features including caves, springs and natural arches. The Department of Natural Resources considers this site a significant natural feature worthy of protection. The property is under private ownership and operates as a farm.

McCraw's Ford Natural Resource Area Park

McCraw's Ford was a significant ford along the James River. The McCraw family settled on the site in circa 1836 and established a homestead and family cemetery. The property is located where Highway 125 crosses the James River and contains several springs. Evidence remains of early American Indian settlements.

Rountree Spring Natural Resource Area Park

This property is located adjacent to the Southwest Sewage Treatment Plant and the Southwest Power Plant. The city purchased the former farm properties as a buffer for the Sewage Treatment Plant. The property features a limestone bluff, several farm buildings, and several springs located along Wilsons Creek. In addition, Ozark Greenways developed the Volunteer Nature Trail in conjunction with South Creek / Wilsons Creek Greenway.

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8. Federal and State Parks or Facilities

The Springfield-Greene County park system should maximize opportunities to share resources with state and federal agencies to provide the best possible parks, open space, greenways, and recreational facilities. The role of these parties in providing opportunities should be acknowledged and encouraged. Refer to the *Springfield-Greene County Park System Evaluation* for inventory information.

It is important to recognize the role that state and federal resources provide in parks, open space, greenways, and recreational opportunities for the citizens of Greene County. The Springfield-Greene County park system should attempt to complement and support these other efforts to provide the best and most efficient parks, open space, and greenway opportunities.

Federal and State Parks or Facilities in Greene County

- Ⓒ Bois D'Arc Conservation Area (MDC)
- Ⓒ Joe Crighton Access (MDC)
- Ⓒ Little Sac Woods Conservation Area (MDC)
- Ⓒ Missouri State Veterans Cemetery - Springfield (Missouri Veterans Commission)
- Ⓒ Nathan Boone Homestead State Historic Site (DNR)
- Ⓒ Phenix Access (MDC)
- Ⓒ Rocky Barrens Conservation Area (MDC)
- Ⓒ Springfield National Cemetery (Department of the Interior)
- Ⓒ Springfield Conservation Nature Center (MDC)
- Ⓒ Wilson's Creek National Battlefield (NPS)

Federal and State Parks or Facilities Recommendations

- Ⓒ Connect Springfield Greene County park system with state and federal resources.
- Ⓒ Utilize funding opportunities of state and federal agencies to provide partial financing of Springfield-Greene County park system.
- Ⓒ Share facilities with state and federal agencies to provide programming and recreational opportunity.
- Ⓒ Establish regular joint planning sessions with State and Federal agencies to ensure coordination of services and projects and avoid duplication of services.

Figure 27, below indicates the Federal and State Parks and Facilities in Greene County.

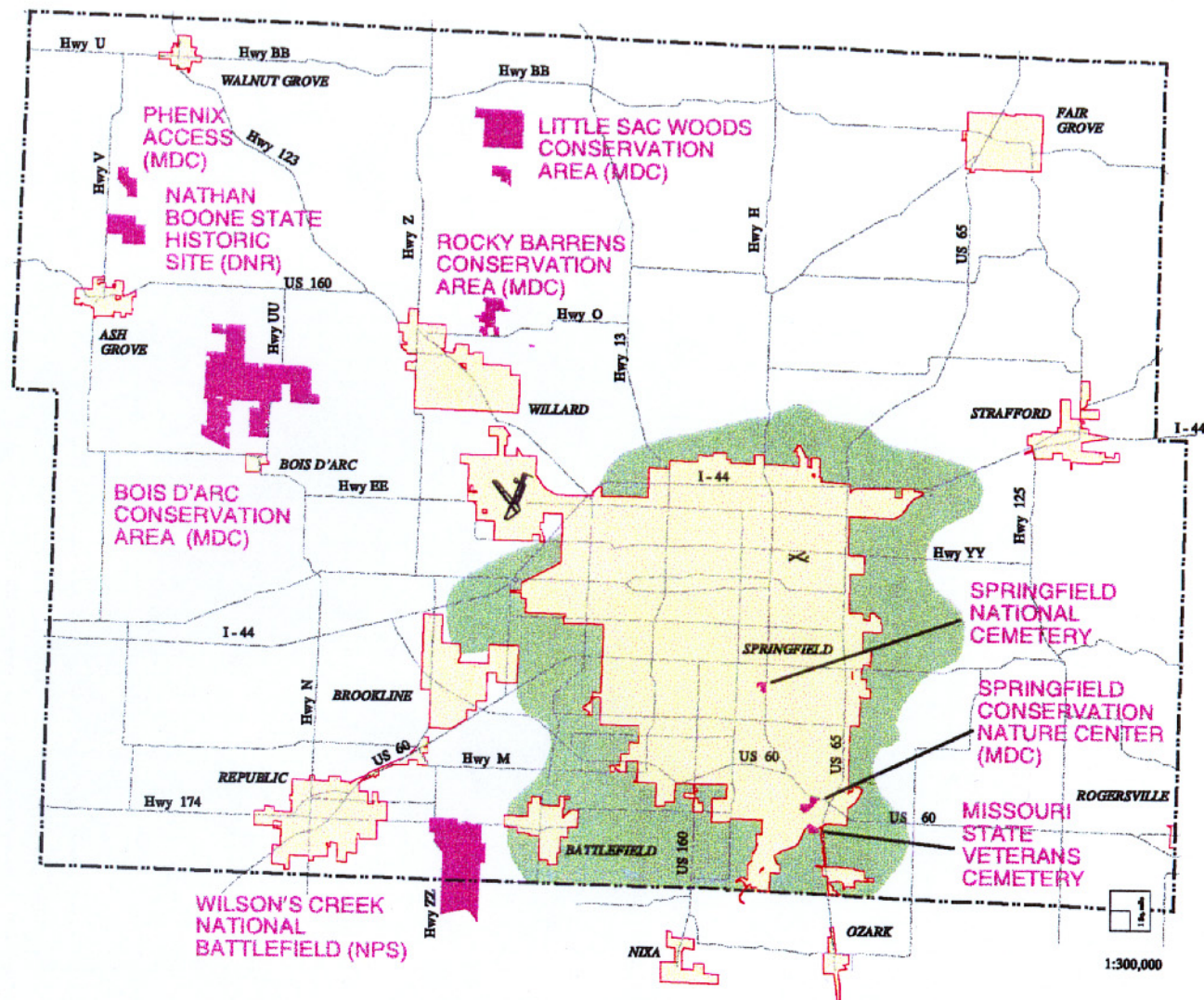


Figure 27

Federal and State Parks or Facilities in Greene County

- State or Federal Properties
- City Limits
- Future Growth Area
- Streets
- Streams
- Greene County



9. Parkways

Definition

After the completion of New York's Bronx River Parkway in 1923, Norman Newton described the parkway project as "a strip of land dedicated to recreation and the movement of pleasure vehicles...The Parkway was **not** itself a road, it **contained** a roadway." These words are still accurate today. The purpose of a parkway is to provide a pleasant and comfortable driving experience using a curvilinear alignment and blending natural and cultural experiences to create an entire corridor as a park. In addition, limiting the access points, excluding commercial traffic, and significantly varying the rights-of-way widths along the corridor, encourages a safe and efficient driving experience at comfortable driving speeds.

Role

Although they are different in form and function, the parkways and greenways are similar in that they are linear, public systems for circulation, recreation and beauty. Parkway are complimentary to a greenway system and should be used to link greenway trails and provide access to major recreation facilities. Together, these systems should link neighborhoods and parks, provide gateways to community districts, and guide the development pattern throughout the community. Thus, parkways play a major role in both the transportation and park systems.

Character

Both the parkway and greenway systems have tremendous potential to positively affect the image of Springfield. Parkway offer amenities such as:

- C Curvilinear alignments
- C Creating an entire corridor as a park
- C Blending natural and cultural features
- C Elimination (or minimization) of grade crossings
- C Significantly varying rights-of way width
- C Landscaped medians between the traffic lanes
- C Landscaped areas along either side of the right-of-way
- C Accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists
- C Exclusion of commercial vehicles
- C Limited vehicular access to key intersections or nodes along the corridor - providing concentrated land use options such as retail, office, and mixed use in an activity center
- C Compatible land uses - residential (urban or rural) is the primary land use along the roadway

Location Criteria

Most of the parkways should be built on the growing fringe of the community, allowing a parkway “ring” around the urbanized area and providing form for future development. However, these parkways are not intended to be a bypass around Springfield, rather they would attract new investment at key places along the parkway while providing a pleasant and generously landscaped “green” corridor. Coordination between the City, County, and State is necessary to develop these two systems over the next few decades. Figure 28, below indicates the conceptual Parkway System.

Parkway System Recommendations

- C Integrate the functional and recreational aspects of the parkway and greenway systems for the most efficient use of facilities and resources.
- C Link the parkway and greenway systems to promote continuous pedestrian and bicycle circulation routes throughout the community.
- C Develop specific standards for the design, construction, maintenance, landscaping, and appearance of the proposed parkway system.
- C Prepare concept plans for the alignment of the proposed parkways. Show specific linkages to the greenway system, neighborhoods, activity centers, and other community facilities
- C Designate parkway corridors and begin the land acquisition process immediately to preserve the land necessary to develop the parkways.
- C Minimize the amount of access points or “curb cuts” along the parkway to minimize conflicts. Generally, encourage access points only at activity centers and/or public streets.
- C Plan and require the land uses along the corridor so that they complement the parkway setting.

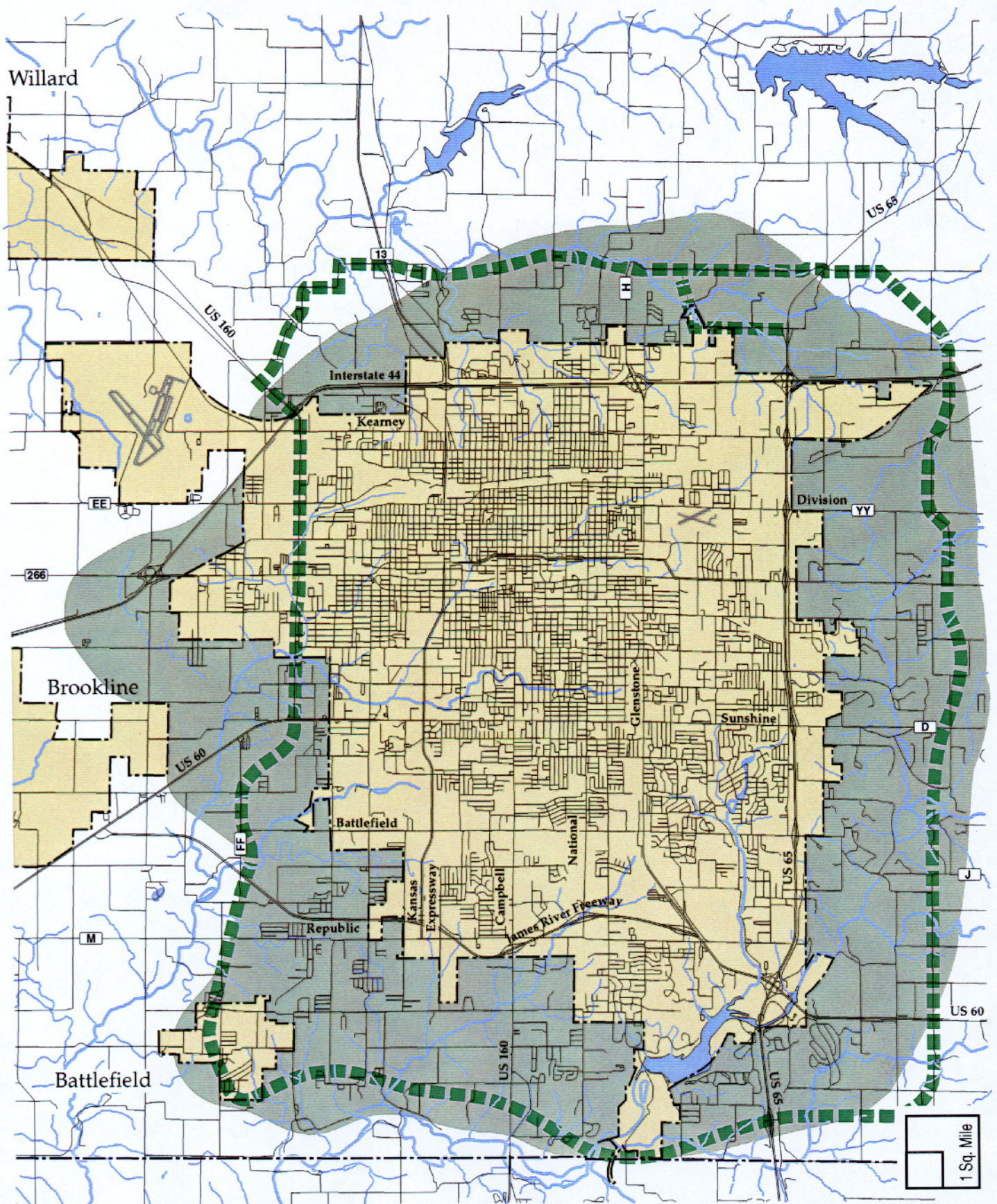


Figure 28
Parkway System

- Parkway
- Future Growth Area
- City Boundary



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10. Administration, Operations, and Maintenance of the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System

Administration

Article XV of the City of Springfield, Missouri City Charter allows for the establishment of Advisory and Administrative Boards. Section 15.16 established an Administrative Park Board by vote of the people on May 15, 1956, to take charge of and operate in accordance with provisions of Article XV all public parks, playgrounds, and recreation facilities now owned or hereafter acquired by the City, except such parks or recreational facilities as may be owned and operated by City Utilities. By vote of the people on November 5, 1996, Section 15.16 was amended to provide for a *Springfield/Greene County Park Board* consisting of nine members, of which a minimum of two members and a maximum of four members shall reside in the unincorporated areas of Greene County, which Board shall further the interest in developing a county-wide park system in Springfield and the unincorporated areas of Greene County.

The Springfield/Greene County Park Board is committed to provide the highest quality of leisure opportunities; to offer programs for relaxation as well as stimulation; and to encourage personal and community enrichment for the citizens of Springfield, Missouri. This mission will be achieved through:

- C** *INTEGRITY AND PRIDE OF SERVICE* in everything we say and do, and with dedication to quality
- C** *COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION* with other public agencies, volunteers, support groups and citizens as we act as ambassadors of the Parks Department in the community to obtain community support and additional citizen input
- C** *CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICES* through cost-effective utilization of people, materials, equipment and technology
- C** *LEADERSHIP AND KNOWLEDGE* through staff training and development
- C** *INNOVATION* in how we meet present and future leisure needs of the City

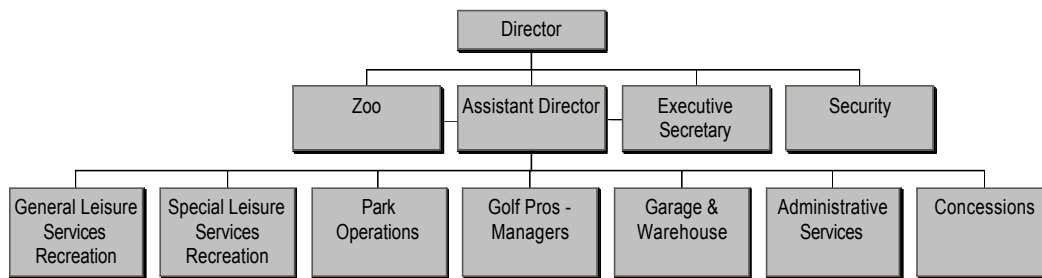
Organizational Structure

The Springfield/Greene County Park Board structure consists of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and five standing committees. These committees are Executive, Finance, Park Development, Recreation, and Golf. Department policy, goals and objectives are formulated and approved by the Board and carried out by paid professional staff. All Board members volunteer their time and talents and do not receive monetary compensation for their services. The Board's management philosophy in regard to department organization and staffing is to maintain a relatively flat structure with seasonal

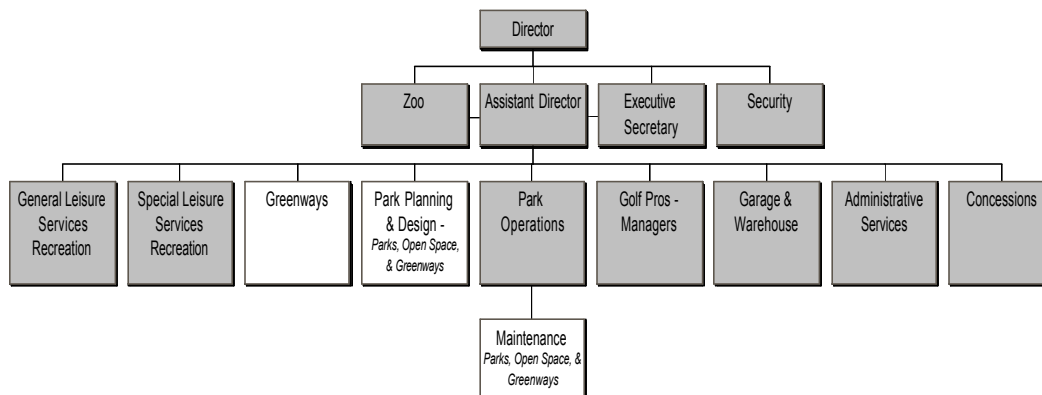
and contractual employees. Volunteers and support groups such as Friends of the Zoo, Lakes Country Youth Soccer, Springfield Tennis Association, Springfield Amateur Softball Association, Ozark Greenways, and others also play a major role assisting the Board in carrying out its objectives. Table 4, below, illustrates the organizational chart for the Board's existing management philosophy and delivery system as well as the proposed changes to the organizational structure based on recommendations of the plan.

Table 4
Springfield-Greene County Park Board
Organizational Structure

Existing Organizational Chart



Proposed Organizational Chart



For the 1998-1999 fiscal year, the Park Board has a \$8.9 million operating budget. This funding is generally comprised of four revenue sources, including:

- C Property (ad valorem) Tax Levy. An 18-cent per \$100 assessed valuation on property within the corporate city limits of Springfield provides 34% of the Board's operating funds.
- C User Fees provide 54% of the Board's operating funds.
- C Springfield City Sales Taxes provide 12% of the Board's operating funds.
- C Capital Improvement fund sources normally come from designated ¼ -cent Capital Improvement Sales Taxes, Revenue Bonds, Grants, and Donations.

Operations and Maintenance

The Springfield/Greene County Park Board operates, maintains, and provides support services for four golf courses, seven aquatic facilities, a 450 species zoo, a Japanese Garden, thirteen centers and sports facilities, approximately 2,200 acres of park land and trails, a day camp, and has over 900,000 annual participants in over 250 leisure programs, activities and special events. The Board has always been very active in promoting tourism by actively soliciting and hosting various local, state, regional, and national tournaments and events. The Board anticipates creating a Sports Commission in 1999 in order to further develop the solicitation of amateur and minor professional sport events. The Board employs 94 permanent staff and 300 seasonal and contractual employees. The per capita spent on Administration, Operations, and Maintenance of the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System is \$40.65, below the national average. Given the level of funding, the operations and maintenance of the parks system has been very good. However, with the anticipated growth of the current system, a need to expand into the unincorporated areas of Greene County, and a desire to elevate maintenance standards, additional funding must be a priority.

Recommendations for the Administration, Operations, and Maintenance of the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System

- C Integrate public improvements into existing and future parks and assure that these public improvements are compatible in a park setting. (e.g., streets, water, sewer, gas and electric lines, stormwater management facilities, etc.)
- C Integrate stormwater management facilities into parks and design facilities that are functional (stormwater management) as well as aesthetic (attractive water feature).
- C Establish a Greenway Division within the Park Department to facilitate greenway acquisition and development.
- C Establish a Planning and Design Division within the Park Department for the planning and design of parks and greenway corridors.
- C Incorporate greenway maintenance as a part of the Park Department's Maintenance and Operations Division.
- C Develop a program to encourage the shared-use of staff and equipment between parks and public landscaping and maintenance duties. Determine whether a new or combined division is necessary to maintain public lands, parks, parkways and boulevards.
- C Establish joint-use agreements between all participating agencies that will promote the sharing of land, facilities, and resources; provide a framework of understanding for all agencies involved in a project; avoid conflict; and eliminate duplication of services.
- C Develop a theme signage program to unify the park, open space, and greenway system.

- C Develop and promote an Adopt-A-Park Program to encourage the community to participate in the maintenance and “ownership” of the park system.
- C Develop an information program to promote our parks, open space, and greenways as a unified system. This program may include brochures, identifiable or theme signage, quality facilities, significant landscaping, civic architecture, etc. - essentially the components that demonstrate community pride in its park system.
- C Establish a Sports Commission within the Parks Department for the purpose of promoting tourism from amateur and minor professional events.
- C Develop and implement an operating and maintenance funding strategy that will increase the per capita expenditures to the national average.

11. Implementation Program

The *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan Element* is a "Grand Plan" in the traditional sense and requires many improvements over the next 25 years and beyond. In this plan, the park, open space, and greenway system is called on to play a new and expanded role in Springfield's urban development. This system will provide the framework for future development and transportation alternatives through its greenways and parkways. The park, open space, and greenway system will also be integral in providing stormwater management, preserving significant natural resources, and in conjunction with other public agencies, it will provide for shared and multiple-use facilities. The system will connect parks and many other elements of the community and play an important part in center city revitalization. And finally, the park, open space, and greenway system will meet the growing and changing recreation demands of the community.

To meet this challenge, this section of the plan outlines the commitment required to provide the described parks, open spaces, and greenways. The implementation section will describe the required improvements, project priorities, action steps and cost estimates for implementation as follows:

- C Fundamental Components for Implementation of the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System
- C Improvement Strategy
- C Five-Year Action Plan
- C Ten-Year Action Plan
- C Funding Sources

Since the scope of this plan is very long range with many recommendations, the implementation program is outlined as the priorities for the first 5- and 10-years and the funding strategies for the first 5 years. As implementation occurs, this section of the plan should be updated on an annual basis to continually assess the plan, review priorities, and revise cost estimates.

The proposed park, open space, and greenway system will set Springfield and Greene County aside as a truly outstanding community - but it will require much dedication on the part of present and future community residents and leaders. To provide a system as described in this plan will require years, if not generations to fully accomplish.

Fundamental Components for Implementation of Park, Open Space, and Greenway System

Although there are many components of the future Park, Open Space, and Greenway System in Springfield and Greene County, there are some fundamental ideas that demonstrate the essence of the plan. **These concepts are the prevailing forces governing the plan.** For one to fully grasp the essence of the plan and the ensuing improvement strategy, one must understand these fundamental concepts and ideas in relation to the vision, the plan details, and the implementation program.

Each of these nine concepts are discussed in detail in appropriate portions of the plan document and are summarized below.

- ‘ **Community As A Park:** using the park, open space, and greenway system as the “thread” which binds the entire community together and influences the development of an urban land use pattern in a rational and harmonious manner.
- ‘ **Community Open Space And Greenway System:** linking parks and open space by utilizing greenways, trails, and other means of connecting people with these resources.
- ‘ **Natural Resources Conservation:** integrating special features into the open space network and providing land conservation leadership of private property.
- ‘ **Land Acquisition And Preservation:** acquiring or preserving land and features through purchase, dedication, donation, and public policy.
- ‘ **Shared Use Of Public Facilities:** cooperating and sharing resources among public agencies - City, County, School District, City Utilities, Library District, State of Missouri, and US Government.
- ‘ **Metropolitan Community Parks Concept:** providing large parcels of land generally along the greenway system, as gathering places, for a variety of recreational opportunities, and for the preservation of natural or sensitive resources.
- ‘ **Civic Park:** providing a central gathering place in the center of the community containing major civic facilities and open space and linking private cultural and historical facilities.
- ‘ **Historic Preservation:** designating *historic parks* and preserving the setting, property, architecture, and cultural amenities of the historic parks.
- ‘ **Active Recreation:** providing *family recreation centers* and *sports complexes* for competitive events.
- ‘ **Improvement Of Existing Parks:** implementing the recommendations of the plan to continually improve and upgrade the park system.

Improvement Strategy

Key Components. This plan proposes many new parks and facilities as well as improvements to existing parks in the system. The highlights of the plan include the following major improvements to the park system:

- C Implementation of a 130-mile greenway system.
- C Design and development of Civic Park.
- C Development of 5 Metropolitan Community Parks.
- C Preservation of 6 Natural Resource Areas.
- C Designation and improvement of 22 School-Parks.
- C Development of 1 new and replacement of 2 existing sports complexes.
- C Designation and improvement to 9 Historic Parks.
- C Development of 3 Family Recreation Centers.
- C Implementation of the Shared-Used Principle
- C Integration of Parkways into the Park, Open Space, and Greenway System.
- C Creation of an Open Space system.
- C Major improvements to existing parks.
- C Establishment of a Greenway Division within the Parks Department
- C Establishment of a Planning and Design Division within the Parks Department

Priorities. The following priorities outline the actions for the first ten years of implementation. However, longer term priorities should always be taken into consideration and not lost because they are long-term. In other words, as opportunities arise to acquire land, develop, redevelop, or accomplish any of the long-range objectives we should be prepared to do so.

In this section, the priorities are categorized into two implementation phases. The first phase consists of the priorities for the first five years (years 1-5) while the second phase lists priorities for the next five years (years 6-10) of the implementation program. These priorities are arranged into five categories as outlined below:

Planning. This category is the conceptual planning of proposed projects and includes defining the site or project boundaries, identifying the issues, confirming the land acquisition needs, and incorporating recommendations from the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan* into a conceptual plan from which staff can work.

Property Acquisition. This category is the acquisition of property to preserve, protect, develop, or expand parks, open space or greenway corridors. This category identifies the highest priority properties or projects for acquisition.

Design and Development. This category is the actual detailed site design and construction of existing and proposed park, open space or greenway projects. This category identifies the highest priority projects including developing and preparing final designs in conjunction with the surrounding neighborhood.

Operations and Maintenance. This category is the actual maintenance of the Park, Open Space, and Greenway systems.

Administration and Policy. This category includes the implementation of the policies and administration of the Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan.

Funding. This plan lays the groundwork for improvements to our parks and open spaces and presents the fundamental principles and concepts to guide the park, open space, and greenway system for the next 20 years or more. However, this plan does not provide the specific costs to implement the plan, nor does it provide a strategy to finance the park, open space and greenway system as proposed. While identifying the costs to implement this plan are relatively straightforward, determining a financing strategy is rather complicated and not entirely relevant to the concepts presented with this document. Once the community has a plan to guide the park, open space, and greenway system, then they can determine how they accomplish the objectives of the plan. As an appendix to the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan Element*, a funding strategy should immediately be prepared to implement the Five- and Ten-year Action Plans. This funding strategy should be an appendix to the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways, Plan Element* and should identify the costs to implement the plan, as well as how these improvements will be financed. Once completed, the funding strategy should be taken to the voters for approval.

Five-Year Action Plan

(Years 1-5, these are the highest priorities within the plan.)

Planning

Greenway System Planning

- C Prepare conceptual plans for ten (10) proposed Greenways, including: Fassnight Creek, James River, Jordan Creek, Little Sac River, Pea Ridge Creek, Pierson Creek, South Dry Sac River, Spring Branch, Ward Branch, Upper Wilsons Creek. *(South Creek/Wilson Creek, Galloway Creek, and Frisco Highline Trail already have plans that are currently being implemented)*
- C Prepare a conceptual plan for the Greenway linkages.
- C Develop design standards for the design, layout, materials, construction, and maintenance of greenway corridors, including trails, facilities, and other features associated with greenway corridors.
- C Identify the conservation network in the greenway system.
- C Dedicate funding to allow Ozark Greenways, Inc. to facilitate land preservation and corridor preservation activities.

Park System Planning

- C Prepare a conceptual plan for Civic Park. Focus on preliminary site layout, location of features and activity areas, phasing, land acquisition, and redevelopment areas
- C Prepare conceptual plans for the existing and proposed Mini Parks (7), Neighborhood Parks (20), and School-Parks (22).
- C Prepare conceptual plans for the existing and proposed Urban Community Parks (6) and Metropolitan Community Parks (5).
- C Prepare conceptual plans for the existing and proposed Special Use Parks and Facilities (18).
- C Determine the location for two (2) new Sports Complexes and prepare conceptual plans for the existing and proposed sports complexes (3).
- C Prepare a plan for the linkage of parks to neighborhoods, schools, and other parks and greenways within the system.
- C Determine the location for three (3) Family Recreation Centers.
- C Develop design standards for the design, layout, materials, construction, and maintenance of each park classification in the system including, paths and trails, lighting, playgrounds, ballfields, facilities, and other features associated with each park classification.

Open Space System Planning

- C Prepare conceptual plans for the six (6) Natural Resource Areas.
- C Prepare a plan for the linkage of open spaces to surrounding neighborhoods, schools, and other parks and greenways within the system.
- C Develop design standards for the preservation, interpretation, design, layout, and maintenance of each tract of open space or Natural Resource Area in the system.

Property Acquisition

Greenway System Property Acquisition

- C South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway
- C Galloway Creek Greenway
- C Little Sac River Greenway
- C South Dry Sac River Greenway
- C Acquire property for preservation and protection of greenway corridors and linkages (with emphasis on the James River and Pierson Creek Greenway corridors).

Park System Property Acquisition

- C Civic Park
- C Community parks
 - C Wilsons Creek Metropolitan Community Park
 - C Pierson Creek Metropolitan Community Park
 - C Valley Water Mill Metropolitan Community Park
- C School-Parks
 - C McGregor School-Park
 - C Robberson School-Park
 - C Reed/Lafayette School-Park
- C Special Use Parks and Facilities
 - C Nathanael Greene Park, Helmich Property
- C Acquire property adjacent to existing parks to improve accessibility and make the parks more inviting to the public.

Open Space System Property Acquisition

- C Acquire property for preservation and protection of sensitive features. Focus on those properties that are most critical or threatened for development.

Design and Development

Greenway System Design and Development

- C South Creek/Wilsons Creek Greenway
- C Frisco Highline Trail
- C Galloway Creek Greenway
- C Little Sac River Greenway
- C South Dry Sac River Greenway

Park System Design and Development

- C Civic Park
- C Community Parks
 - C Lake Springfield Metropolitan Community Park

- C School-Parks
 - C McGregor School-Park
 - C Robberson School-Park
 - C McBride School-Park
 - C Reed/Lafayette School-Park
 - C Bissett/Wise School-Park
 - C Cherokee School-Park
- C Special Use Parks and Facilities
 - C Family Recreation Center at Chesterfield Community Park
 - C Nathanael Greene Park parking lot
 - C Springfield Skatepark
 - C Dickerson Park Zoo - implement the recommendations from the Master Plan
- C Upgrade the facilities and features of the existing parks to implement the proposed recommendations from the plan. Focus on historic parks including Doling, Fassnight, Sequiota, Smith, and Washington and complete the following:
 - C Preserve, repair, and rehabilitate historic elements of the parks.
 - C Replace non-historic or inappropriate features in historic parks.
 - C Add deficient amenities to all historic parks.

Operations and Maintenance

- C Provide additional staff, equipment, and funding to ensure a higher level of maintenance within the system.
- C Develop maintenance standards for the greenway and open space system and update the maintenance standards for the park system.
- C Determine the location for two (2) satellite facilities for park operations and maintenance. Utilize the shared use concept and consider the following public agencies to determine a location of satellite facilities: Police, Fire, Public Works, City Utilities, Public Schools, and the County.

Administration and Policy

- C Assume the role as coordinator and lead agency responsible for the design, construction, and maintenance of the existing and future greenway system.
- C Establish a Greenway Division within the Parks Department.
- C Establish a Park Planning and Design Division within the Park Department.
- C Hire new staff to support the Greenway and Park Planning and Design Division within the Park Department.
- C Utilize the subdivision and planned development process to preserve, protect and acquire greenway corridors, the conservation network, future parks and sensitive and natural features.
- C Develop and implement a set of design standards to guide the design and placement of facilities and structures for the park, open space and greenway system.
- C Develop an information program to promote our parks, open space, and greenways as a unified system.
- C Develop an identifiable or theme signage program for the entire park, open space, and greenway system.
- C Develop a satellite facility for park operations and maintenance. Utilize the shared use concept.

- C Implement the following policies:
 - C Community-As-A-Park
 - C Shared Use Concept
 - C Regional Perspective
 - C Environmental Considerations
 - C Adopt-A-Park/Greenway/Open Space program
- C Review the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan* and assess the priorities on annual basis
- C Update the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan* every five years.

Ten-Year Action Plan

(Years 6-10, as the five year priorities are completed these are the next set of priorities within the plan.)

Planning

Greenway System Planning

- C Review and assess the greenway system plan.
- C Explore potential greenway / rail-trail corridors to create a regional greenway system.
- C Update individual greenways segment plans.
- C Prepare a detailed plan for corridor linkages. Focus on a north/south linkage corridor.

Park System Planning

- C Review and assess the overall park system plan, and update as necessary.
- C Update individual park site plans.
- C Evaluate the need for additional parks at schools not currently identified as a school-park site.
- C Provide for neighborhood parks or school-parks in future growth areas.

Open Space System Planning

- C Assess the open space system and continue to provide it throughout the community.

Property Acquisition

Greenway System Property Acquisition

- C Pierson Creek Greenway
- C James River Greenway
- C Jordan Creek Greenway
- C Fasnigh Creek Greenway
- C Upper Wilson Creek Greenway
- C Acquire property for preservation and protection of greenway corridors and linkages (with emphasis on the James River and Pierson Creek Greenway corridors).

Park System Property Acquisition

- C Civic Park
- C School-Parks
 - C Reed/Lafayette School-Park
 - C Shady Dell School-Park
- C Special Use Parks and Facilities
 - C Acquire property for two Family Recreation Centers. (north and central city sites)
- C Sports Complexes
 - C Replacement site for Ewing Sports Complex
 - C Replacement site for Meador Sports Complex

- C Continue to acquire property adjacent to existing parks to improve accessibility and make the parks more inviting to the public.
- C Acquire property in future growth areas in advance of development.

Open Space System Property Acquisition

- C Acquire property for preservation and protection of sensitive features. Focus on those properties that are most critical or threatened for development.

Design and Development

Greenway System Design and Development

- C Pierson Creek Greenway
- C Segments of James River Greenway
- C Segments of Jordan Creek Greenway
- C Upper Wilsons Creek Greenway
- C Segments of Fassnight Creek Greenway

Park System Design and Development

- C Civic Park - future phases
- C Community Parks
 - C Valley Water Mill Metropolitan Community Park
 - C Wilsons Creek Metropolitan Community Park
 - C Fassnight Urban Community Park
- C School-Parks
 - C Reed/Lafayette School-Park
 - C George Washington Carver School-Park
 - C Horace Mann School-Park
 - C Wanda Gray School-Park
 - C Westport School-Park
 - C Incrementally develop the remaining school-parks within the entire system.
- C Special Use Facilities
 - C Replace both community centers at Doling Park and combine into one facility.
 - C Develop one Family Recreation Center (north or central site).
 - C Dickerson Park Zoo - implement the recommendations from the Master Plan
- C Sports Complexes
 - C Develop a replacement for Ewing Sports Complex.
- C Upgrade the facilities and features of the existing parks to implement the proposed recommendations from the plan. Focus on historic parks including Doling, Fassnight, Sequiota, Smith, and Washington and complete the following:
 - C Preserve, repair, and rehabilitate historic elements of the parks.
 - C Replace non-historic or inappropriate features in historic parks.
 - C Add deficient amenities to all historic parks.

Open Space System Design and Development

- C Lost Hill Natural Resource Area
- C George Washington Carver Natural Resource Area

Operations and Maintenance

- C Continue to provide the staff, equipment, and funding to ensure a high level of maintenance within the system.
- C Assess and update the maintenance standards for the park, open space, and greenway system

Administration and Policy

- C Continue the role as coordinator and lead agency responsible for the design, construction, and maintenance of the existing and future greenway system.
- C Utilize the subdivision and planned development process to preserve, protect and acquire greenway corridors, the conservation network, future parks and sensitive and natural features.
- C Implement the following policies:
 - C Community-As-A-Park
 - C Shared Use Concept
 - C Regional Perspective
 - C Environmental Considerations
 - C Adopt-A-Park/Greenway/Open Space program
- C Continue to review the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan* and assess the priorities on annual basis
- C Update the *Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan* every five years.

Funding Sources

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board has studied various funding sources to provide for the continued operation of the City-County Park System and to provide new parks and recreational opportunities for the community. This section identifies the existing funding sources currently used to fund the Park System as well as other funding sources not currently used by the City or County.

Funding Sources Used for Parks Operation and Maintenance

<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>1998-99 Projected Revenue</u>
Property tax levy	\$3,053,223
User Fees and Charges for Services	2,350,156
Transfer from General City Fund	1,056,878
Golf Enterprise Fund*	2,430,000

**It should be noted that golf operations are separate from general park and recreation operations. The golf program is considered an enterprise fund, where the costs of providing goods and services to the general public on a continuing basis are financed or recovered primarily through user charges. In other words, green fees and other charges associated with playing golf on municipal courses pay for the operation of the golf courses.*

Funding Sources Used for Capital Improvements

Capital Improvements Sales Tax - The City levies a quarter cent sales tax for capital improvements. The tax was renewed by the voters in February 1998 and will expire in 2001. When the tax was approved, the voters also approved a list of projects to be funded from the proceeds. The list includes expenditures of \$5,065,000 over a 3 year period for park, open space, and greenway acquisition, development, and improvements.

Community Development Block Grants - Springfield is an entitlement city in the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Each year the City Council allocates CDBG funds. CDBG funding in 1998-99 was \$2,140,494; \$10,000 was allocated toward park improvements.

Revenue Bonds - The City may issue revenue bonds to finance facility construction. These bonds are then paid back through user fees. Revenue bonds were used to finance construction of the Rivercut Golf Course. The bonds will be repaid through green fees and other golf charges.

Partnerships - The City has partnered with the private sector to provide needed facilities. A recent public-private partnership resulted in construction of the soccer dome at Cooper Park. The property was purchased by Lakes Country Youth Soccer and the Cooper family and then donated to the City. Lakes Country Youth Soccer leased the land back and built the facility. Partnerships can also be created with state and federal agencies to provide parks. Ozark Greenways received \$182,000 from the Missouri Department of Conservation for the development of the Highline Trail.

Neighborhood Improvement District - With neighborhood support, the City created a neighborhood improvement district in the Parkwood neighborhood to fund acquisition and

development of a neighborhood park. The total cost, including some maintenance costs, was approximately \$160,000.

Donations/Easements - The City has accepted donations of land and money for public parks. Most notably, land was donated by the Cooper family for Cooper Park. Acquisition of land for Chesterfield Park was funded partially through the capital improvements sales tax and through a donation. Fundraising efforts of the Friends of the Zoo, a private organization, have proven to be a successful means of financing improvements at the Zoo.

Miscellaneous Grants - The City has been very successful in obtaining various grants. Operational grants have been awarded by the *Museum Institute* for improvements and upgrades at Dickerson Park Zoo. The Park Department has also received grants from the *Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)* for the development of the South Creek Wilson Creek Greenway project. Other grant sources include the *Missouri Local Landmark Parks Fund*, *National Recreational Trails Fund*, *Land Water Conservation Fund*, and grants from private foundations.

Available Funding Sources

The following funding sources are not currently used but are available to the City of Springfield and/or Greene County to fund parks, open space, and greenways.

Funding Sources Set Aside for Parks, Open Space, and Greenways

Parks and/or Stormwater Control Sales Tax - The City or the County may impose a sales tax up to one-half of one percent ($\frac{1}{2}\%$) to fund either stormwater control or local parks, or both. A $\frac{1}{2}\%$ sales tax could generate approximately \$13,650,000 annually if levied within the City or \$16,000,000 if levied county wide. (Voter approval required.)

Parks Property Tax (City Only) - The City currently levies 18 cents per \$100 assessed valuation. The levy can be set at any amount approved by voters. Each additional penny of property tax would generate \$148,000. (Voter approval required.)

Parks Property Tax (County Only) - The County may also impose a property tax for parks and recreation. Two state statutes provide for park property taxes. One limits the maximum tax levy to 20 cents per \$100 assessed valuation (67.775 RSMo) while the other (64.325 RSMo) sets no limit.

Extension of City Park System Into Areas Within Three Miles of the City - Areas within 3 miles of the City may petition to become part of the Springfield Park system, thereby allowing the park tax to be levied in these areas with approval of the voters. This would allow for expansion of the Springfield park system into areas immediately outside of the City. In November 1996, voters approved the creation of the Springfield-Greene County Park Board. However, this voter approval did not authorize the park tax levy outside the existing city limits. (Voter approval required.)

Regional Recreation District - A regional recreation district may be created that encompasses the City of Springfield and/or all or part of Greene County. It could also include areas outside Greene County and/or other municipalities within the County. The

district would be an independent political subdivision. With voter approval, the regional recreation district could enact a property tax of up to 60 cents per \$100 assessed valuation. These funds could be used to pay costs associated with the establishment, administration and maintenance of public recreational grounds, facilities, and parks. Each penny of property tax within Greene County would generate approximately \$210,000. A levy of the maximum 60 cents would generate approximately \$12,600,000. (Voter approval required.)

Metropolitan Zoo District - A special purpose district for a zoo in Springfield and the surrounding area is possible through a vote of the electorate. Upon creation of the district, a property tax of up to ten cents per \$100 assessed valuation can be levied. The district is an independent political subdivision of the state. Revenue generated would depend on the area included in the Metropolitan Zoo District. (Voter approval required.)

Other General Funding Sources

Capital Improvements Sales Tax - Both the City and County could levy a capital improvements sales tax if approved by voters. The City currently levies 1/4% and could levy an additional 1/4%, which would generate approximately \$6,825,000 annually. In the past about one-tenth of the capital improvements sales tax revenue has been used for parks. The County could levy a one-fourth, three-eighths, or one-half of one percent sales tax for capital improvements. Respectively, they would generate \$8,000,000, \$12,000,000 and \$16,000,000. (Voter approval required.)

Property Tax For General Municipal Purposes - The Constitution of the State of Missouri allows a property tax levy of up to one dollar (\$1) per \$100 assessed valuation for general municipal purposes. Prior to 1978 the City levied the \$1 property tax, which was used for general municipal purposes. When the City passed the general sales tax, it included in the City Charter a provision that limited the right to increase this property tax to no more than 50 cents without amending the Charter. The City, with voter approval, could raise its levy up to one dollar per \$100 assessed valuation; however, any amount over 50 cents would also require an amendment to the City Charter. Each additional penny of property tax would generate \$148,000. A 50 cents levy would generate \$7,400,000 while a \$1 levy would generate \$14,800,000. (Voter approval required.)

Room Tax - The City is not limited in the amount of room tax that it can levy; however, any increase is subject to voter approval. For each additional one cent of room tax, approximately \$453,000 would be generated. The voters defeated a proposal to increase the tax to 5 cents in 1994 which would have been dedicated to the development of an entertainment zone. (Voter approval required.)

Earnings Tax - Both Kansas City and St. Louis administer a city earnings ("income") tax. It would take a change in Missouri law as well as city voter approval in order for Springfield to enact such a tax. Kansas City started levying a 1/2% earnings tax in 1964-65. Since 1970-71, they have levied a 1% earnings tax. Their earnings tax makes up 43% of their general fund budget revenue. Kansas City's tax is levied on the earned income of all residents, income which is earned in Kansas City by nonresidents, and net profit of businesses conducting business in Kansas City. Most employers withhold the earnings tax from employees and make quarterly payments. In cases where the earnings tax is not withheld by the employer, monthly payment is required. Self-employed

individuals and businesses file annual returns. Figures are not available for Springfield alone, but the total payroll is estimated at \$3,140,000,000 for Springfield and Greene County. A 1% earnings tax administered throughout the County could generate approximately \$31,400,000 annually from income earned within the County. This figure does not include income earned by Greene County residents working outside Greene County nor does it include revenue from a tax on the net profit of businesses conducting business in Greene County.

Neighborhood Improvement District - State law authorizes cities or counties to establish Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NIDs) for the purpose of improving public infrastructure. Once established, the city or county may issue temporary notes and long-term general obligation (GO) bonds (up to 20 years) to pay for improvements. Bonds are repaid through a special assessment on the properties within the district. NID was used in the Parkwood neighborhood to purchase property and improve it for a neighborhood park. Maintenance of the park for the life of the bonds was also included. (Must have majority support of property owners with district and City Council approval.)

Land Dedication/Fee In Lieu of Dedication (Impact Fees) - One method of acquiring and improving parks in developing areas is to require the dedication of land or payment of a fee in lieu of dedication when a property is developed. This would probably be considered an impact fee. Many communities across the United States have enacted impact fees which are a way to measure and charge a developer for certain costs that the developer is causing the community. Springfield has made limited use of impact fees. Impact fees can be used to recover and pay for costs of streets, sewers, parks, and other public facilities which are caused by new development. Generally Springfield's Subdivision Ordinance provides for the recovery of most costs that are internal to the subdivision like streets and sewers, but there has been no effort to recover any of the other costs which new development creates for the community such as the need for new streets or parks. Many communities recover significant sums of money through impact fees in order to avoid having the general taxpayer pay for these costs. A significant body of law has grown up over the imposition of impact fees, since developers should not have to pay more than their share of the impact. Whether or not a vote is required depends on whether or not the impact fee is a fee or a tax.

Other Methods - Other methods would include increasing user fees, using lease-purchase, using Chapter 99 RSMo land clearance for redevelopment authority, and redistributing general fund revenue.

Table 5
Summary of Potential Revenue Generation From Available Funding Sources

Funding Source	Maximum Levy	Potential Annual Revenue
Parks and/or Stormwater Control Sales Tax	½ cent	City - \$13,650,000 County - \$16,000,000
City Parks Property Tax	No Limit	Each additional 1 cent = \$148,000
County Parks Property Tax (67.775 RSMo)	20 cents/\$100 assessed valuation	\$4,200,000
County Parks Property Tax (64.325 RSMo)	No Limit	Each additional 1 cent = \$210,000
Extend Park System into Areas within 3 miles of City	No Limit	Not Available
Regional Recreation District Property Tax	60 cents/\$100 assessed valuation	City - \$8,880,000 County - \$12,600,000
Metropolitan Zoo District City - \$1,480,000	10 cents/\$100 assessed valuation	County - \$2,100,000
Capital Improvements Sales Tax	City - 1/4 cent County - ½ cent	City - \$6,825,000 County - \$16,000,000
Property Tax for General Municipal Purposes (City)	\$1/\$100 assessed valuation	\$14,800,000
Room Tax	No Limit	Each additional 1 cent = \$453,000
Earnings Tax	No Limit	1% throughout the County = \$31,400,000 (Assumes an est. total payroll in Springfield and Greene Co. is \$3,140,000,000)